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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Happy dice rolling to all, and to all a good game. Have a safe and fun holiday season.

THE KING RETURNS

For those of you with your heads in the sand, the *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King* opens this month on December 17. For a select number of you who live in or near major urban areas, some theaters are offering special screenings of the first two movies back to back in the week leading up to the *Return of the King* release—special screenings of the director's cuts, that is! Each director's cut adds around 30 minutes to each movie's length, meaning you'll need to be seriously friendly with your seat by the time you sit through nearly 8 hours of juicy *Lord of the Rings* goodness. Don't forget your trucker's buddy!

DRAGONS IN YOUR MINIS

The second *D&D Miniatures* expansion, *Dragoneye*, hits shelves this month. Full of dragons and various draconic goodness, you need to check these out. They also make a great holiday gift for the miniature gamer's stocking (we hope our families are reading this). Check out page 73 for an exclusive preview of some of these figures.

D&D CARTOON SERIES ON DVD?

Rhino, the producers of the *Scourge of Worlds* interactive DVD D&D adventure, recently used their website to poll people about what classic cartoon series they want to see on DVD next. *He-Man* and *M.A.S.K.* were good choices on their list, but squirrelled away at the bottom was the *Dungeons & Dragons* button. If you didn't get a chance to vote, check out **www.rhino.com**. They have a lot of neat stuff to buy, and you can find an email address to start your letter writing campaign for the cartoon you most want to see on DVD. If you voted but didn't pick the *Dungeons & Dragons* cartoon, or if you're going to start campaigning for a different cartoon, you should know what you're up against: Senior Editor Matthew Sernett voted 347 times for Bobby and Uni.

VIDEO GAME GOODNESS

Recent months have seen the release of some great video game titles for RPG enthusiasts, including *The Temple of Elemental Evil*, *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance 2*, and *Dungeons and Dragons: Heroes*. It's a good time to be a gamer. Check out upcoming issues for Silicon Sorceries featuring material from these and other great titles.

WYRM'S **TURN**

FROM THE EDITOR
MINIATURE MOJO

We're all a-giggle about the new *D&D Miniatures* line. Several of us placed a minis order last week, but the lack of figures in hand hasn't stopped us from talking smack to one another about who can build a better warband.

Not only have I started using minis in my home campaign, the skirmish game also has me itching to get my hands on more figures. Former editor-in-chief Jesse Decker sat some of us down a while back to teach us the skirmish system. An hour or so later, *Dungeon* associate editor James Jacobs sat smugly across the table from me, victorious as his chaotic good elves sent my lawful evil warband scurrying.

Not one to take a loss lightly, I proceeded through the gamer's Five Phases of Losing, a reaction common among many gamers who get their butts walloped when trying a new game. Similar to the five stages of grief, you might have witnessed some of these or—ahem—experienced them firsthand.

Stage 1: Denial. This stage starts before the game is over. I'm down to my last mini and James still has four or five figures left on the board. Sure, my guy is still standing, but my dishes were done. Despite overwhelming evidence of my loss, I grimly persisted in fighting until my Half-Orc Fighter went down beneath the blows of James's cleric.

Stage 2: Anger. My favorite stage, this is where I say the game is stupid or flawed. Yeah, that's it: Blame the game. The game made me lose. This is also where I take my poor performance out on my dog, how late it is, the slacker who built my warband (way to go, Jesse), and just about anything else in sight.

Stage 3: Whining. If you're grieving, this would be the bargaining step. We're grieving—sort of—but this is where true gamers whine. In this stage, I say something ridiculous like, "Well, if I hadn't miscounted the squares between my skeleton and your archer, I would have won." Yeah, right. Guess what, bozo. If you make mistakes, you only have yourself to blame.

Stage 4: Depression. I get all mopey in this stage, nursing my Mountain Dew while slumping my shoulders. The goal here is to make your opponent feel bad about winning. *While Anger might be my favorite stage, I'm best at this one. That leads us* to the final stage.

Stage 5: Anger, Part II. In the normal stages of grief you get acceptance here. Not gamers. The difference between this stage and stage 2 is that I don't play the blame game here. I get determined. So what if I just had my ass handed to me by a bunch of elves? Suck it up, build a new warband, and get back in the game. If you find yourself at this stage, look across the table at your smug opponent and say, "Let's do it again, chump!" or something equally classy and tactful.

Of course, it helped that when we added up the points from our respective warbands, mine was 10 points short. So had the playing field been level in the first place, I would have won. Ah, stage 1—how I missed thee. Until we play again, I'll just have to put up with James strutting around the office bragging about being undefeated (he's 1-0! Whoopty-freakin'-doo!).

Do you use miniatures in your D&D game? Have you tried the new D&D minis? What do you think of the skirmish game? And what do you think of this issue's miniatures column? We're still looking to fine-tune the format, so we'd love to hear from you. Send your comments to **scalemail@paizo.com**.

Chris

Chris "Can I Play a Troll?" Thomasson
Editor-in-Chief

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CAMPAIGN CLASSICS
This special issue returns D&D gamers to their roots. We're presenting an article from nearly every D&D campaign setting ever produced, from AL-QADIM to TALADAS. Each article takes some part of these campaign settings and presents it updated for D&D 3.5. This issue also features a history of the D&D campaign settings by Stan!

Dragonlance
By Jamie Chambers
This article gives you information on playing a draconian character, as well as some feat options for your favorite draconian.

Greyhawk
By Erik Mona
Resident GREYHAWK guru Erik Mona gives us dozens of regional feats for the GREYHAWK setting, usable whether you play in Oerth or not.

Al-Qadim
By Dean Poisso
The sha'ir class returns to D&D! Harness the power of magic through your gen with this new 20-level class.

Ravenloft
By David Noonan
You fought Strahd in 1st Edition and 2nd Edition, now battle the most legendary vampire in D&D in revised 3rd Edition. Plus, re-visit Castle Ravenloft with a brand-new map of Strahd's lair.

Kara-Tur
By James Wyatt
This article provides ancestor feats and martial arts styles for the regions of Kara-Tur.

Red Steel
By Frank Brunner
Witness the return of cinnabar and red steel, the afflicted, and tortles.

Plus, BLACKMOOR, DARK SUN, PLANESCAPE, HOLLOW WORLD, and more!

SCALE **MAIL**

READERS TALK BACK
AD ODDITIES AND CLARIFICATIONS

We received many emails in praise of issue #312, and we thank you for it. And as usual, readers helped us learn from our mistakes by pointing out some errors that slipped through. Here's a sampling.

Ad Nauseum

You guys at Paizo are doing a great job with the magazines, and everything seems good with Chris leading the group, but every now and then someone does something a little silly. Ads are great. Not only do they tell us what new stuff is out, they stop us from paying $20 or more on an issue. The Science Fiction Book Club insert placed in the middle of a piece of two-page artwork absolutely destroyed a really nice picture, though, and those cards are quite difficult to remove without damaging the magazine. The pull-outs you include monthly are fine, because they come out so easily, but if you're going to put a rather permanent insert in the magazine, it should go somewhere less obtrusive, such as between articles or at least between pages of text.

Kurtis Black
Address withheld

I feel you owe an apology to Marc Sasso. His artwork deserves better treatment than to have its presentation trampled by an advertiser's ego.

Scott R. Redman
Address withheld

What idiot was in charge of deciding where ad inserts go?

Juan Hernandez
Address withheld

Who the $%#! thought it would be a good idea to put the Science Fiction Book Club insert right in the middle of the two-page "Blackguards" spread?

Michael J. Schmidt
Address withheld

I would be that $%#! idiot. Well, me and our super-cool ad guy, Rob, but mostly me. That fact is, we didn't realize one of the ads was an insert when we sent the magazine off to the printers. And when an insert like this is placed, it needs to go at the first form break (that's magazine lingo for after the first 16 pages). That happened to fall in the middle of the blackguards spread. You might look at that spread and see it's labeled as pages 18 and 19. That's because we number our pages with the cover as page 1 to fulfill postal requirements. But as far as the printers are concerned, that was page 16, so the insert was placed there. (Hopefully, you can understand that this isn't as simple a problem as you might have suspected.)

To make a long story short, our old ad process wasn't the smoothest in the world. We finally have a full-time ad guy who is working with the editorial, art, and production staffs to streamline our ad trafficking process to make sure something like this doesn't slip through again. We were as disappointed, upset, and surprised about it as any of you, believe me.

Chris Thomasson
Editor-in-Chief

Another Coolest Moment

I'm as calm as the next guy, but much to my surprise, I was reading my most recent issue of *DRAGON Magazine*, and the email I sent was the very first one in the "Scale Mail" section! But wait, who is this Brad Blanchard? He didn't write that; those are my exact words. I am Shaun Nelson, and geez, one of the coolest moments in my life—seeing a letter I wrote actually in print—and I can't show anyone because I'm not credited. This was both the best and worst day of my life, but thanks for answering my question . . .

Shaun Nelson
Address withheld

Sorry, Shaun. I hope seeing another of your emails answered in print is

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some consolation. Brad Blanchard, paladin that he is, emailed us about the error too—so that he wouldn't "take credit for someone else's work." Kudos to you, Brad.

Matthew Sernett
Senior Editor

And an Uncool Moment

I've noticed there were many things wrong with the article in issue #312 about the *Book of Exalted Deeds* monster classes. First of all, it insisted that the quesar does not get any skills or feats because it is a construct, but according to the *Monster Manual*, constructs with an Intelligence score get 2 skill points per level and feats. All of the monster level advancements except the asuras lack a natural armor bonus advancement, but the *Book of Exalted Deeds* excerpt says the rhek gets a +7 natural armor bonus. Finally, there might be an omission from the article: In 2nd edition, the asura had the ability to cast spells as a 9th-level cleric.

Posted to the Wizards of the Coast message boards by Kobold Avenger

As is often the case when we're working with text from an as-yet-unpublished supplement, an error found its way into the article. The quesar should get skills and feats normally, for exactly the reasons described above. The natural armor bonus error can be attributed to the same cause. Here are the natural armor bonus totals for each of the monsters from the article: asura +6, bariaur +0, hollyphant +9 (winged elephant form) and +15 (mastodon form), leskylor +10, moon dog +7, quesar +0, rhek +7. To apply these natural armor bonuses, spread them evenly out over the course of the monster's level progression. For example, give the fourteen-level asura a natural armor improvement at 1st, 4th, 6th, 9th, 11th, and 13th level, bringing them to their +6 total. Oh, and the asura no longer casts spells as a 9th-level cleric. That one we got right.

Chris Thomasson

For Crying Out Loud

When first looking at your magazine almost a year ago, I was intrigued by all the D&D info inside and knew I just had to have a subscription. New to D&D, I thought this would be a great source of helpful information. I even got the subscription to *Dungeon* for the great quests and even more inside knowledge. Along with the great info, there were amazing pullouts of maps and such. At first, I was thrilled whenever I got my magazines in the mail, waiting barely a second before happily ripping open the plastic and devouring every article! Now, the plastic could stay on for days and my hunger to read the magazine never rises. Where has all the Dungeons & Dragons info gone? Everything I loved about the magazines that made me get a subscription has been ripped out and replaced by d20 information. I appreciate that you are trying to accommodate everyone with that, but D&D started d20. Without it, d20 would not be possible. The things in the magazine are somewhat compatible, but are not official (as the magazine states right on the cover) D&D. To use this information some rules must be bent, and I don't play D&D that way. What happened to all the great maps, monsters, characters, traps, video game (D&D ones, of course) reviews, and such? It's all turned toward

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d20 and left D&D blowing in the wind. I can't afford to purchase other d20 things because I spend all my money on D&D! In the first magazine, pretty much every article applied to DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and when searching through my newest magazine, the only thing pertaining strictly to official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS were ads and 3 pages of FORGOTTEN REALMS! Ads for crying out loud! If you're going to call yourself "the official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS magazine" please try to put DUNGEONS & DRAGONS in it and not just simple d20. Also, where has the content of *DUNGEON* gone? There used to be NPCs, beginner quests, and high-level quests, but now there aren't many adventures, there are no critical threats, the quests are very small, and there aren't any pullouts to help with these quests such as there use to be! I don't mean to sound rude. I do appreciate you getting gaming out there, but I don't appreciate pushing the game that started it all to the side. Please put D&D back into your magazines. I'm not the only one who really misses it.

Kristina T.
S. Paris, ME

The Only Letter

This is in reply to "The Play's the Thing" from *DRAGON* #312. You might be receiving a few nasty letters on this issue, and I feel I need to add my two cents Canadian as well. To quote: "Chat programs are relatives of IM programs," and the author used mIRC as an example.

Coming from someone who has done online gaming for years, I was outraged by the comment. An mIRC is a program used to access various IRC (Internet Relay Chat) networks. IMs are independent programs that sit in your system tray primarily for one-on-one conversations.

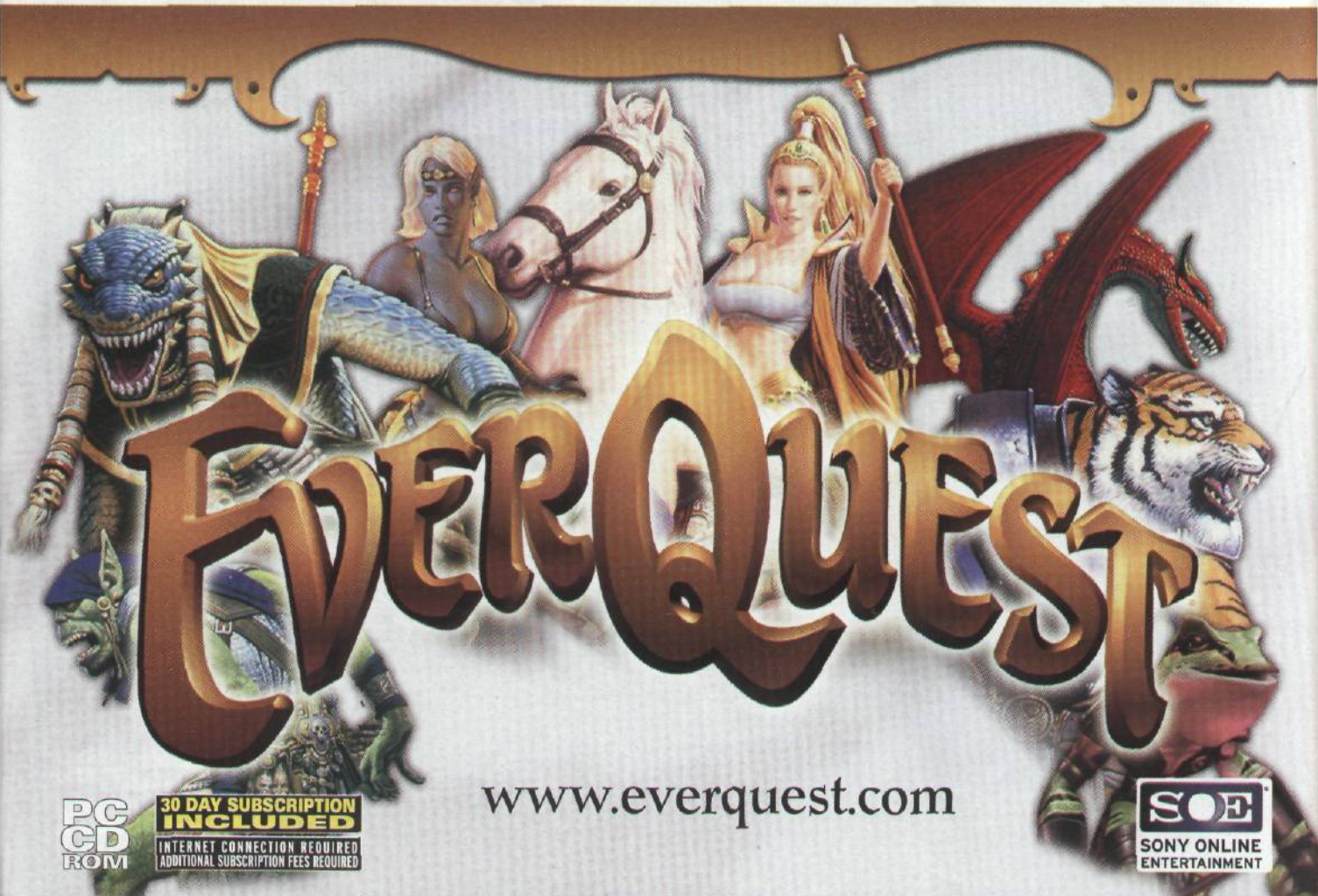
Let me elaborate: IRC is a network of telnet (read text) servers designed to help people from different places chat and get to know each other. IRC is pretty much as old as the Internet; it's one of the first interactive means of communication outside of newsgroups. IRC Gaming is not only better than scaled down IM chat or Web Chat, it's more robust and can be accessed on any machine as long as it can get online. You can also load scripts, tools, macros, and other functions to simplify gaming and make it fun. The advantage of IRC is also its disadvantage. As an open network, you need to create a room or channel to attract people. For the benefit of user sanity, rooms can be made private, secret, or limited to a certain amount of users so that once a game has started you don't get interrupted.

So please, don't compare instant messengers with IRC. They are two completely different forms of chat programs. IMs are primarily for one-on-one conversation, whereas IRC is group chat at its finest.

Robert Menard
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Thank You Statler and Waldorf

I would like to express some criticism about the last few issues of *DRAGON* (especially #309 and #310). Being a faithful reader of *DRAGON* for over 200 issues, I feel like I did in the years before 3rd Edition came out. More and more of the articles are filler—stuff cranked out to meet deadlines and fill pages. Sorry, but that's what it feels like. Let's see what I mean:



NOW ON NEWSSTANDS EVERY MONTH

Every month, *Dungeon Magazine* provides the best in official Dungeons & Dragons adventures, stunning cartography and art, d20 industry news, and more. This month's exciting offerings include:

The Black Egg
By Steven Montano
The screams became overpowered by the sound of the terrible falling star—a black orb of malign energy hurled from the firmament in the dead of night. In that instant, the village of Rhale was utterly destroyed, reduced to a hollow crater of flaming decay. Now, frightened talk of a dark presence descended from above has taken root, though none can put name to the faceless fear that might reside within this terrible orb. A D&D adventure for 11th-level characters.

Tammeraut's Fate
By Greg A. Vaughan
Ten years ago, zombies arose from the foamy sea to take vengeance against the inhabitants of Firewatch Island. Now, they have risen again, just in time to welcome the visiting player characters! Will your heroes manage to escape the island with their lives (to say nothing of their delicious brains)? A D&D Greyhawk adventure for 6th-level characters.

Polyhedron #165
Star Wars RPG heroes go up against the insidious forces of Ord Vaxal, prison planet of the Empire, in a wide-ranging planetary gazetteer by Gary Astleford. We check in with the Fiend-Sage of Rel Astra in another installment of the *Living Greyhawk Journal*, Downer tries to put the beholder Lord Manglecramps behind him forever, and we update you on the latest and greatest news from the d20 industry and the RPGA Network.

DUNGEON #106

POLYHEDRON #165

Issue #309: The theme (War) might have been quite interesting. There were a few glimpses of excellence here—as in the "A Brief History of War" by Dean Poisso (very brief, though)—but most of the issue's contents were just new statistics and a big series about some githzerai invasion that was so straightforward (read: boring) that I couldn't really care enough to read most of it further than a few paragraphs each. As for the githzerai astral ships and so on, everything has already been done—much better—in SPELLJAMMER.

Issue #310: This issue forces me to wade through heaps of class-combo discussions and "new" classes. As if I couldn't discuss the merits of those with every other player at my table. Did you provide a much-needed list of what exactly has changed in 3.5? You couldn't be bothered in the 3.5 core books, so you can't be bothered here.

Sorry for my rant, but what we need are fresh ideas—not a rehash of stuff already in the core books, not new sets of statistics or prestige classes (they are *way* too easy to create if you have a deadline, I know), but thoughtful pieces that make me want to sit down and game *right now!*

Here's hoping your magazine gets a bit more inspired.

Cordially,
Max Robitzsch
Address Withheld

Things That Make You Go Hmm

The table of contents in issue #312 lists "Dork Tower" as appearing on page 97 and "Nodwick" as appearing on page 104. The page number for "Nodwick" was right, but on page 97 is an *advertisement* for the Dork Tower books—*no* comic. Argh!

David Emmons
Kentwood, MI

The "Dork Tower" for that issue was pushed to issue #313. We accidentally left the entry in the table of contents. It was not an attempt to point you to the ad or to make you say "Argh!" Sorry about that.

Matthew Sernett

Where *is* the Beef?

When I received *Dragon* issue #312, I saw the heading on the cover that read "Miniatures Terrain" on the lower left hand side. I ripped open the plastic and zipped through the book, pulled out the center spread poster, and instead of seeing miniatures terrain, I saw a poster announcing the D&D miniatures. I might be repeating the old lady from the Wendy's commercial here, but "Where's the terrain?'

Michael D. Moore
Durham, NC

The article which included terrain was pushed to issue #313 along with "Dork Tower." Errors on the cover are our greatest fear, and the lack of miniatures terrain in that issue is a nightmarish reality. As punishment, we're keeping six d4s in our back pockets for a week. And just so you understand what that means: Editors spend 99.9% of their workday sitting at a desk.

Matthew Sernett

Perfect in Someone's Eyes

Although I have more issues of *Dragon* than I care to count, I've never been motivated to write until now. While I enjoy your magazine overall, I usually find a number of articles that aren't suited to my taste—with the exception of #312. Every article in that issue was brilliant! It was a perfect issue, and I think you should use it as a benchmark for the months to come.

The core and prestige classes for evil characters were long needed and well done. The celestial monster classes were great, and an interesting preview to the *Book of Exalted Deeds*. The spells of cold have gone into immediate use in my game. I am reading the *War of the Spider Queen* novels and love seeing the main characters laid out. As for "The Ebon Maw" . . . what can I say? Articles like that are a DM's dream!

I also like what issue #312 didn't have. The "Elminster's Guide" articles suit too narrow an audience, in my opinion. I was also glad to see the fiction removed. To be frank, I don't go to *Dragon* for fiction.

Paizo has done a fine job with *Dragon* and I hope that #312 is a continuing trend toward excellence. I hope articles like "The Ebon Maw" continue to appear as they are the kinds of game additions that wow both DM and player alike. You have my attention, and I eagerly await the next issue.

D. Olsen
Toronto, Canada

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YOU ARE LATE ON YOUR LOAN PAYMENTS. THE PENALTY FOR BEING LATE IS ONE-THOUSAND GOLD COINS, PLUS THE MONEY YOU OWE JUST INCREASED 25%.
UGGG
OH GODS... PLEASE KILL ME... PLEASE LET ME DIE ON THIS..... BEAUTIFUL... DAY.
AAAA! HELP! A DRAGON IS BURNING MY FARM!!

by Tony Moseley

UP ON A **SOAPBOX**

SELF-DESTRUCTING PCS

UNEARNED LEVELS ARE THE PC'S WORST ENEMY

by Gary Gygax

Many DMs have asked me how I handle characters that are obviously over-powered, "jumped-up" PCs that never really earned their high abilities and survive by massive hit-point total, super magic, and unearned ease in attacking with sword or spell. To such inquiries, I respond that in recognizing this sort of character I simply play the encounters a bit differently, mainly in the presentation of information, not in "fudging" of the dice rolls for monsters. Inept players will destroy their characters without having to resort to such methods. Allow me to illustrate this with the following account:

While at a regional convention in upstate New York, I was asked to run adventures in my campaign's Castle Greyhawk Dungeons. An assembly of players gathered for what was billed a moderate-level excursion. One aggressive young chap came to the table with a 13th-level ranger, supposedly his least powerful character. Although the others in the group had PCs of about half that level and were chary about including the lad with the ranger, I assured them all would work just fine, even with experience division given by shares according to level.

There followed some initial exploration and minor encounters as the team worked its way down into the dungeon maze. The first real test came when the party came into a large chamber with many pillars and several doors. As the main group discussed what strategy they would follow in this locale, a bold dwarf broke off and opened a nearby door. Rather than telling the player what he saw, I told the players this:

"The dwarf slams the door. He reels back and comes staggering toward the rest of you, stammering something that sounds like. 'G-ga-get back! W-wuh . . . Horrible! A bunch of them!' He is obviously fearful and thus incoherent."

The 13th-level ranger hesitated not a moment. Without consulting with his fellows, the character ran to the door that the dwarf had slammed closed and opened it without concern. The four wights that were preparing to exit their lair confronted him, won initiative, and two succeeded in hitting. In the ensuing melee, these undead monsters managed to strike the ranger twice more, so at the end of the battle, the ranger was of a level more commensurate with the others, 9th as it were.

Much disturbed by that turn of events, but clearly not chagrined by his rash behavior and the results, the ranger insisted on leading the way. Soon thereafter, they discovered a staircase down, and beside it lay an alcove wherein a great clay pot rested, radiating heat and billowing smoke. The other PCs advised leaving the strange vessel alone, but the ranger determined to attack it. As he did so, all the other characters fled the area. With a single blow the ranger shattered the pot, and thus a really angry fire elemental was freed. It didn't take long for that monster to finish off the ranger, and thereafter it departed.

I took the character sheet from the fellow, suggesting that he should be more careful with such potent characters in the future, for surely he had spent a long time gaining 13th level with his now dead ranger PC. He left the table without comment, and the rest of the group went on to several exciting hours of dungeon delving.

This shows that unearned levels don't translate to playing ability. To the contrary, the power gained often makes the player overconfident. Any able DM can craft adventures that weed out unwise and inept players who think to bulldoze their way through problems by use of undeserved power. That's possible only in computer games where saved games and cheat codes serve to reward such play.

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BROTHERHOOD of the BURNING HEART

THE MAGIC AND METTLE OF *Fire*

by Clifford Horowitz ◆ illustrated by Howard Lyon

The Brotherhood of the Burning Heart is an eclectic mix of people that desire to ignite their souls and see the world in flames. Members of the Brotherhood don't dedicate themselves to fire because of its destructive abilities, nor do they have any wish to actually burn the world. To the members of the Brotherhood, fire embodies creativity and passion. They venerate fire as raw emotion made tangible. They crave its intensity, and they wish that everyone could share this passion and emotional connection.

The organization began as a collection of bards that sought the ultimate muse. These bards collected and studied countless writings regarding inspiration and the passion to create. Despite the many similarities in theme among these sources, the bards found themselves no closer to their goal, until a fledgling minstrel named Numa noticed the overwhelming number of references to fire. Numa postulated that this was more than coincidence and began to study the fire instead of the inspirational writings. Of course, by day he continued to help his masters, but by night he gazed into the dancing flames. One day, he understood it all in a flash of inspiration. Numa now tells others that in a moment of sudden awareness, he felt a connection with the fire, that it ignited something within him—a flame that has grown larger since that epiphany.

The Brotherhood of the Burning Heart, as followers of Numa's philosophies came to be known, quickly drew other bards to its ranks, all of them hoping to feel the touch of fire on their souls. But in a very short time, people from other walks of life began asking for Numa's teachings as well. Artists of all types came first, followed by craftsmen seeking inspiration.

Numa then realized that everyone could benefit from the touch of fire. While the Brotherhood never enforced an exclusive membership policy, they never expected anyone but musicians and performers to take interest in their organization. Seeing the fire of the Brotherhood sweep into pastures previously undreamed, Numa threw its doors wide open, officially welcoming anyone who desired to join the group.

SIZE AND RESOURCES

For most of its life, the Brotherhood of the Burning Heart existed as little more than a club that gathered in a concert hall. As adventurers began to join the group, the Brotherhood changed. These intrepid individuals filled the Brotherhood's coffers with hard won riches. More importantly, however, the adventurers traveled far and wide, and they carried the teachings of the Brotherhood with them. Enough were taken with Numa's message that they set up their own gathering places in other cities. These emissaries spoke so eloquently about the passion of flame that they inspired new members to establish places of study and worship.

The Brotherhood now stands larger than Numa ever envisioned, and because of that, it is not a tightly managed or closely knit operation. Travelers might carry Numa's teachings throughout the countryside, but the founder never aspired to leave his city. Thus, the only thing uniting these temples is common doctrine. The temples have no regular contact with one another; there is no official charter of cooperation, no central treasury, and no real organization of any sort. Each temple is effectively its own guild with no ability to draw on the coffers of others. Temples range from small huts with only a handful of faithful and an even smaller handful of coin, to entire bardic colleges overflowing with riches.

Numa's original congregation left the concert hall long ago and now studies fire in its own temple, located just on the outskirts of town for safety reasons. A great brazier burns there continually, and at any given time, a small group of worshipers can be found gazing into its depths, searching for inspiration from the secrets of the flame.

Although individual sects of the Brotherhood vary greatly, the organization statistics in the Brotherhood of the Burning Heart sidebar represent Numa's founding sect. It has a small core for such a widespread organization, but

many members find themselves stricken with wanderlust and leave Numa's temple after a time, giving him a small but constantly changing sect of regular supplicants.

Numa used to be a young bard out to prove himself, but since igniting his soul with the passion of flame, he is a changed man. While others might speak of him as enlightened, Numa is no calm, meditative monk. If anything, he is more full of passion and idealism than ever before. While it was frustration that pushed him onward in the past, now inspiration drives Numa. Whenever the muse grants him an idea, whether for a poem or a plan to expand the Brotherhood, he attacks the work that must be done, throwing himself into it with wild abandon. The intensity with which he speaks makes him an inspiring leader and a popular man.

Several factors hinder the formation of a united leadership for the Brotherhood, however. While all members of the guild agree that apathy is the enemy, and it is important to embrace passion, their doctrine offers little guidance beyond that. Thus, the Brotherhood of the Burning Heart possesses a membership filled with people who feel passionately about a host of different issues, and many of them run contrary to one another. Add to that the number of remote temples that evolve in their own doctrines, and the Brotherhood has no leadership hierarchy. Indeed, most Brotherhood gathering places have never even heard of Numa.

The BROTHERHOOD *of the* BURNING HEART

The Brotherhood of the Burning Heart (Medium): AL N; 7,500 gp resource limit; Membership 25; Integrated (human 9, dwarf 5, gnome 4, elf 2, other 6).

Authority Figures: Numa, male human Brd 9/Heartfire fanner 2; Shael Heavyhammer, female dwarf Exp 12.

Important Characters: Grak Forkbeard, male dwarf Exp 6; Malseth, female human Sor 4; Gorm, male human Brd 4; Tark, half-orc Bbn 5.

Others: Mixed: Brd 2 (3), Brd 1 (4), Clr 1 (2), Exp 2 (3), Exp 1 (1), Mnk 1 (1), Sor 2 (1).

Because of this, the Brotherhood of the Burning Heart has only the most general of agendas, and it is decidedly neutral. Members of the guild learn to stoke their heart's fire, but receive no moral or ethical guidance in doing so. Certain temples might possess a more refined doctrine that includes these aspects, but overall the Brotherhood teaches no such lessons.

NEW SPELLS

The following spells are a small sampling of the magic dedicated to the Broherhood by some of its magically inclined members. Although they were initially designed exclusively for Brotherhood use, the spells are now freely for sale, just like any other inspired work paid to the guild.

Distract

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)
Targets: One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart
Duration: 1 round/caster level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell arouses a zest and appreciation for life in the targets. The targets are distracted as they study the shapes of the clouds, the texture of tree bark, the patterns carved into a stone wall, the temperature and scent of a breeze—anything and everything gets their attention, if just for a moment.

The targets of this spell must succeed at a Will save or lose themselves to the urge to experience nearly everything. Failure indicates the creatures suffer a -4 penalty to all Concentration, Search, Spot, and Listen checks.

Heartfire

Evocation [Light, Fire]
Level: Brd 2, Drd 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: Intelligent creatures within a 5-ft.-radius burst
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

The Brotherhood of the Burning Heart can serve several purposes in your campaign. By virtue of its dues system, a Brotherhood temple easily serves as the purveyor of superior quality goods, including magical wares. Dues are not paid in coin. Instead, each member of the guild puts what he learns to use in some artistic endeavor and donates the result to the Brotherhood. Inspired minstrels might compose a song, while artisans provide masterwork items. Each contributes some salable item no less than once annually, although more frequent donations are appreciated.

In most towns, temples of the Brotherhood quickly establish reputations as repositories of the greatest works of art and goods available for miles around; people flock to them in order to acquire finely crafted goods.

Depending on the specifics of a given temple, the Brotherhood can provide training as well. Mundane lessons such as how to swing a sword or weave a spell won't be found inside a Brotherhood temple, but lessons on how to harness the heart's fire are certainly offered in many. More rural temples boast fierce barbarians and amazingly dedicated rangers as congregants. Zealot clerics of unshakable faith, monks with steely discipline, sorcerers wielding power as intense as their personalities—all these and more might be found in any given Brotherhood temple.

Recruitment is another way to involve your party with the Brotherhood. Many temples have an active recruitment program to continually expand the fold. While the party could certainly run afoul of the Brotherhood depending on how they react to guild recruiters, the party might also be asked to perform some service for the guild specifically because they are not members. For example, the party could be asked to arbitrate a dispute, since objectivity is difficult thing to attain within the Brotherhood when everyone is so fervently opinionated.

Outside forces might also ask the party to become involved with the guild. For example, a temple dedicated to a fire deity might take offense at the Brotherhood's portrayal of fire and hire the party to drive the group's members away, reduce their influence, or even embark on a quest to prove that fire is in fact a divine creation of the church's patron deity rather than a physical manifestation of passion.

A flickering red fire and outlines the subjects. Outlined subjects shed light as torches. Outlined creatures do not benefit from the concealment normally provided by darkness (although a 3rd-level or higher magical *darkness* effect functions normally), *blur, displacement, invisibility,* or similar effects. In addition, affected creatures take 1d4 points of fire damage each round as their passions manifest as physically damaging fire. Creatures that make a successful Fortitude save take only half damage each round for the duration of the spell (minimum 1 point per round). Spellcasters affected by this spell that try to cast spells must make Concentration checks (DC 10 + half the continuous damage last dealt) each round as they take continuous damage from the spell. The fire created by this spell can be extinguished by normal means; doing so ends the outlining effect. This spell does not affect creatures that lack an Intelligence score.

Raging Flame

Transmutation [Fire]
Level: Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)
Area: 30-ft.-radius spread
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell inflames existing fire, giving it a passion to burn. All normal fires within the area of effect flare up, burning twice as hot and twice as bright. The illumination radii of all nonmagical fires double (so a torch casts light in a 40-foot radius), and all nonmagical fires deal double damage (so a creature that catches on fire takes 2d6 points of fire damage per round). Fire that leaves the area remains affected by the spell.

Fire affected by this spell burns out twice as quickly. So a torch that is the subject of a *raging flame* spell burns out in 30 minutes instead of the normal hour.

This spell only affects nonmagical fires. Magical fire, such as from the *continual flame* or *fireball* spells, burns normally even if cast within the area of effect of this spell, although nonmagical fires started by such a spell can be affected by *raging flame*.

Raging flame counters or dispels the effects of *slow burn*.

Arcane Material Component: A vial of alchemist's fire.

Slow Burn

Transmutation [Fire]
Level: Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)
Area: 30-ft.-radius spread
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell lends fuel to an existing fire, allowing it to burn off the intangible power of passion as much as from physical substance. Because the fire consumes less of the physical fuel that sustains it, it burns for twice as long without losing any of its intensity.

In addition, the fire is much harder to extinguish. It takes twice as long to put out a fire under the effects of this spell, and if a roll is required (such as the Reflex save required to extinguish flames if a creature is on fire), two successful rolls over 2 rounds are required to successfully put out the fire. If one such roll fails, the creature must begin trying to extinguish the flames again as if it had never succeeded at the first roll.

This spell only affects nonmagical fires. Magical fire, such as from the *continual flame* or *flaming sphere* spells, burns normally even if cast within the area of effect of this spell, although nonmagical fires started by spells can be affected by *slow burn*.

Slow burn counters or dispels the effects of *raging flame*.

Arcane Material Component: An oil-filled hourglass.

FEATS OF FIRE

Unlike the spells listed above, the feats described in this section were not developed as gifts to the Brotherhood; they are outgrowths of the guild's teachings. While they are not closely guarded secrets, few outside of the Brotherhood ever learn these abilities because they are so closely tied to the Brotherhood's doctrine. DMs might want to restrict access to these feats to those who act in accordance with the guild's teachings.

Burning Focus [General]

You channel your frustration into magical power.

Prerequisite: Cha 13, Greater Spell Penetration, Spell Penetration.

Benefit: You can choose one creature whose spell resistance you failed to overcome in the last round with your caster level check. The next time you try to overcome that creature's spell resistance, you gain a +1 morale bonus to the level check to overcome the creature's spell resistance. This bonus increases by +1 after each such failed check (to a maximum bonus of +10), so after three failed level checks, you would gain a +3 bonus to the next level check to bypass that target's spell resistance. You can apply the bonus from this feat to only one creature at a time. The bonus stacks with that provided by both Spell Penetration and Greater Spell Penetration.

If more than 1 minute passes before you cast another spell at the creature that requires a level check to overcome spell resistance, you lose the bonus. You also lose this bonus as soon as you successfully bypass the chosen creature's spell resistance or cast a spell that doesn't affect the chosen creature (so if you cast a spell that targets another creature or in an area that doesn't affect the chosen creature).

Radiant Spell [Metamagic]

Your fire spells have the potential to blind your opponents.

Prerequisite: Cha 15, ability to cast a spell with the fire descriptor.

Benefit: This feat can only modify spells with the fire descriptor that cause damage. A spell modified by this feat requires a creature to succeed at a Will save at the spell's save DC (or what would be the spell's save DC if the spell doesn't normally have one) each time it is damaged by the spell. Failure indicates the damaged creature is blinded for 1 round per spell level (prior to adjustment by this metamagic feat). Success indicates the creature is not blinded, but it is dazzled for 1 round. A radiant spell uses up a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Flash Casting [General]

Your passion for magic manifests visibly when you cast a spell.

Prerequisite: Cha 13, ability to cast a spell with the fire or light descriptor.

Benefit: A fiery nimbus surrounds you whenever you cast a spell with the fire or light descriptor. This makes it

almost impossible to hide while spellcasting, but it makes you difficult to look at as well. For 1 round after casting a fire or light spell, creatures that attempt to attack you suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls. Creatures must be able to see you to be affected by Flash Casting, and creatures with blindsight or creatures that cannot see are immune.

MAGIC ITEMS OF THE BROTHERHOOD

The following is a small sampling of magic items that members of the Brotherhood have created. Like all gifts made to pay guild dues, the Brotherhood freely sells these items to anyone with the coin to purchase them.

Gauntlets of Heartfelt Blows: These soft leather gauntlets sport a large, flat gem on the back of each hand. Ringed by steel, these stones slowly shift color as long as the gauntlets are worn. Whenever the bearer becomes involved in combat, the stones glow brighter, and their colors begin to swirl with intense energy, casting a fiery aura around any weapon in the wearer's hands. The wearer's melee attacks cause extra points of fire damage equal to his Charisma bonus (minimum of +1). This bonus damage also applies to touch attacks. The fire does not deal damage to the wearer or anything the wearer carries.

Faint transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *burning hands;* Price 12,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Girdle of Hate: This broad belt is made of hide, hair, and bone, and it is studded with small hooks along its length. The exact source of these materials is ambiguous until someone with a racial or favored enemy buckles it on and speaks a command word, at which point the girdle appears to be constructed from a creature representative of one of the wearer's chosen enemies. If the wearer has more than one racial or favored enemy, the girdle applies its benefits to one enemy of the wearer's choice (chosen when the belt is first donned). The hooks, while useless as weapons, make a fine mounting point for captured scalps, and the cords of hair easily hold other grisly trophies. Any trophies of the appropriate type of racial or favored enemy smoke for a moment when first mounted on the hooks, then become cured and preserved within 1 round.

The belt doubles all bonuses the wearer gains against the chosen racial or favored enemy, such as those possessed by dwarves or granted by the ranger class.

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, caster must have racial or favored enemy; Price 16,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.

FIRE-SOULED CREATURE

Fire-souled creatures have been touched by the essence of passion as embodied by fire. These individuals are driven by some goal or pursuit to the point of obsession, and the infectious nature of their vision means they often wind up with devoted followers. Few physical cues betray that a creature is fire-souled, although some claim those with a burning spirit possess an unmistakable glint in their eyes. Still, identifying a fire-souled creature is not difficult if one is familiar with their tendencies. Fire-souled creatures betray their natures in their behavior if not their appearance.

Although extremely motivated individuals like Numa can sometimes spontaneously transform their passion and become a fire-souled creature, most require an external catalyst to complete this change. The Brotherhood of the Burning Heart provides this catalyst in the form of a ritual available at any of their temples. The simple rite requires a handful of individuals that have the template and a bonfire. The ritual can only transform a subject that burns with passion already; it cannot transform just anyone into a fire-souled creature. The ideal subject is deeply dedicated to an ideal or ruled by intense emotion. Many temples require a would-be recipient to prove his passion before taking part in the ritual, and all but a few Brotherhood temples perform this transformation ritual only on other members of the Brotherhood.

Sample Fire-Souled Creature

This ettin looks mostly like a normal representative of its species, except its eyes blaze with a zealous conviction and self-confidence radiates from it like a beacon.

This example uses an ettin as the base creature.

Fire-Souled Ettin
Large Giant (Fire)
Hit Dice: 10d8+20 (65 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 30 ft. in hide armor (6 squares), base speed 40 ft.
Armor Class: 18 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +7 natural, +3 hide), touch 8, flat-footed 18
Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+17
Attack: Morningstar +12 melee (2d6+6) or javelin +5 ranged (1d8+6)
Full Attack: 2 morningstars +12/+7 melee (2d6+6) or 2 javelins +5 ranged (1d8+6)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Overwhelming passion
Special Qualities: *Haste*, inspiring, low-light vision, superior two-weapon fighting, unshakable
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +5
Abilities: Str 23, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 15
Skills: Listen +10, Search +1, Spot +10
Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership[B], Power Attack
Challenge Rating: 7
Alignment: Chaotic evil

Combat

Superior Two Weapon Fighting (Ex): An ettin fights with a morningstar or javelin in each hand. Because each of his two heads controls an arm, the ettin does not take a penalty on attack or damage rolls for attacking with two weapons.

Overwhelming Passion (Su): Five times per day, the fire-souled ettin can activate this ability as a free action. If its next melee attack or touch attack hits, the target of the attack must make a DC 17 Will save or or lose one special attack with a save DC based on Charisma (fire-souled ettin's choice, chosen from abilities it has seen the target use). If the target casts spells as a bard or sorcerer or has several spell-like abilities, overwhelming passion blocks access to a single spell. The creature loses access to this special attack for 2 rounds. Overwhelming passion is a mind-affecting ability.

***Haste* (Sp):** Once per day as a standard action, the fire-souled ettin can *haste* himself as a 10th level sorcerer.

Inspiring (Su): Each ally within 10 feet of the fire-souled ettin gains a +1 morale bonus on all attack rolls and skill checks, and a +2 morale bonus on saves against charm and fear effects. This ability functions while the fire-souled ettin is conscious, but not if it is unconscious or dead. Inspiring is a mind-affecting ability.

Unshakable (Ex): The fire-souled ettin is immune to all stunning or dazing effects.

Skills: The ettin's two heads give him a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks.

Creating a Fire-Souled Creature

"Fire-souled" is an acquired template that can be added to any creature with an Intelligence of 3 or more (referred to hereafter as the base creature). A fire-souled creature has all the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here.

Type: The creature gains the fire subtype.

Special Attacks: A fire-souled creature retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following special attack:

Overwhelming Passion (Su): A fire-souled creature is alive with passion and inspiration, but not all creatures can withstand such intensity. With a successful melee attack against an opponent with an Intelligence score, the fire-souled creature can transfer a bit of its own energy into the target, threatening to overwhelm the target's emotional capacity.

Invoking this power is a free action, and it requires a successful melee attack or melee touch attack to deliver. If the attack hits, the target must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the fire-souled creature's racial Hit Dice + the fire-souled creature's Charisma modifier) or lose one special attack with a save DC based on Charisma (fire-souled creature's choice, chosen from abilities it has seen the target use). If the target casts spells as a bard or sorcerer or has several spell-like abilities, overwhelming passion blocks access to a single spell. The creature loses access to this special attack for a number of rounds equal to the fire-souled creature's Charisma bonus (minimum of 1 round). The fire-souled creature may make use overwhelming passion once a day per two HD it possesses, with a minimum of once per day. Overwhelming passion is a mind-affecting ability.

Special Qualities: A fire-souled creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following special qualities:

Haste (Sp): Once per day, the fire-souled creature can spur itself into frenetic action. This ability works as a *haste* spell (caster level equal to the fire-souled creature's racial Hit Dice). Activating this ability is a standard action.

Inspiring (Su): Each ally within 10 feet of the fire-souled creature gains a +1 morale bonus on all attack rolls and skill checks, and a +2 morale bonus on saves against charm and fear effects. This ability functions while the fire-souled creature is conscious, but not if the creature is unconscious or dead. Inspiring is a mind-affecting ability.

Unshakable (Ex): A fire-souled creature is so driven that it is immune to all stunning or dazing effects.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Cha +4.

Feats: A fire-souled creature gains the Leadership feat as a bonus feat. If the fire-souled creature already has the Leadership feat, it gains a +2 bonus to its leadership score.

Organization: Same as the base creature, although the Leadership feat means that the fire-souled creature often has cohorts or followers of some kind.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +3.

HEARTFIRE FANNER

Heartfire fanners teach the ways of the Brotherhood of the Burning Heart, as well as epitomizing those qualities the Brotherhood espouses. In their travels they further inflame their souls by giving the uninitiated a taste of what true life feels like. Trained in techniques that evoke a plethora of powerful emotions in their comrades, they earn converts to their cause not with convincing words, but with demonstrations that show others what they miss by living in their cold, mundane ways.

Most heartfire fanners are bards, although any character suitably skilled in some method of inspiring performance can make a competent member of this class.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the heartfire fanner prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A heartfire fanner gains no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells: When a new heartfire fanner level is gained, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in whatever spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class level. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus feats, for example). If a character had more than one arcane spellcasting class in which he could cast spells before he became a heartfire fanner, he must decide to which class he adds each level of heartfire fanner for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Bardic Music: At 1st level, the heartfire fanner gains the bardic music ability as a 5th-level bard if he did not already have it from a previous class. All the bardic music effects (countersong, *fascinate,* inspire competence, inspire courage, inspire greatness, inspire heroics, song of freedom, *suggestion* and *mass suggestion*) become available to him immediately, subject to their usual Performance skill and level requirements (see the Bard section in Chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook*). A heartfire fanner's class levels stack with any bard levels for all bardic music calculations, including the number of uses of bardic music available per day. The heartfire fanner with bard levels does not gain the normal bardic music abilities as he advances in heartfire fanner levels.

Hit Die: D6

HEARTFIRE FANNER REQUIREMENTS

To become a heartfire fanner, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Feats: Negotiator.
Diplomacy: 10 ranks.
Perform: 10 ranks.
Feat: Skill Focus (Perform).
Spellcasting: Ability to cast 1st-level spells.
Special: Must be an active member of the Brotherhood of the Burning Heart and have achieved some degree of personal inspiration from the dogma of the guild (DM's discretion).

HEARTFIRE FANNER CLASS SKILLS

The heartfire fanner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Intelligence: Craft, Search.
Wisdom: Listen, Sense Motive, Spot.
Charisma: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Perform.
N/A: Speak Language.

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Inspired Fight (Su): At 1st level, a heartfire fanner with 11 ranks in Perform can ignite a martial passion even beyond the ken of normal bardic inspiration by stirring the hearts of warriors already heady with battle.

This ability confers bonus feats upon an allied subject within 30 feet of the heartfire fanner. The target is free to choose which feats he receives from the feats the heartfire fanner possesses or the fighter class bonus feat list. The target must meet all prerequisites to receive the feats, although he can use one bonus feat as a prerequisite for another.

The heartfire fanner bestows a number of bonus feats equal to the number indicated in Heartfire Fanner advancement table.

For every three character levels the heartfire fanner has, he can bestow bonus feats to one additional creature. Each inspired creature may select her own feats. The heartfire fanner must perform his bardic music for 1 round and the targets must hear him before they gain the bonus feats. The feats remain for as long as the heartfire fanner sings and for 5 rounds thereafter. This is a mind-affecting ability. Unlike other bardic songs, the heartfire fanner cannot use this ability on himself; he can only inspire others with it. Inspired fight is considered bardic music, so using this ability takes up one use of the heartfire fanner's bardic music ability for the day.

Magic Flare (Su): The heartfire fanner with 12 or more ranks in Perform learns to inspire spellcasters to excel beyond their own limitations by unlocking their passion for their craft.

By performing for 1 round as a standard action, the heartfire fanner can inspire one allied spellcaster within 30 feet, imbuing the spellcaster's next spell cast with a metamagic feat that the spellcaster possesses. The spell must be cast within 1 round per heartfire fanner level to gain the benefit of magic flare. The altered spell does not take up a higher-level spell slot for the spellcaster, nor does a spontaneous caster (like a sorcerer or bard) require a full-round action to cast the spell affected by magic flare.

The heartfire fanner can only allow a spellcaster to improve a spell with a metamagic feat that alters a spell's level up to the number indicated on the Heartfire Fanner Advancement table. So a 2nd-level heartfire fanner can only allow a spellcaster to alter a spell with a metamagic feat that would normally add one level to the affected spell (such as Silent Spell). At 4th level, the heartfire fanner can allow a spellcaster to improve a spell with a metamagic feat that alters a spell's level up to two levels (such as Empower Spell).

A spellcaster targeted with magic flare still can't cast an altered spell at a level higher than he could normally cast a metamagic spell. So an 8th-level sorcerer, capable of casting 4th-level spells, targeted by magic flare can't use his Empower Spell feat to improve a *fireball*, since the adjusted level of that spell would be 5th, one level higher than the maximum spell level allowed by his spellcasting level.

Magic flare is considered bardic music, so using this ability takes up one use of the heartfire fanner's uses of bardic music for the day. The heartfire fanner can target himself with magic flare.

Bolster Courage (Su): A 3rd-level heartfire fanner with 13 or more ranks in Perform can strengthen the resolve of an ally benefiting from his inspire courage ability. When a heartfire fanner uses the inspire courage bardic music ability, he can choose one ally currently under the effects of the ability to receive a +2 bonus to attack rolls and Armor Class in addition to the normal bonuses associated with inspire courage. Use of this ability does not take up a use of the heartfire fanner's uses of bardic music ability for the day. The heartfire fanner cannot target himself with bolster courage.

Prolonged Passion (Su): At 5th level, a heartfire fanner with 15 ranks in Perform learns not only to inspire passionate emotion in others, but also masters the art of blending his music to amplify his allies' existing passions.

This use of bardic music inspires one target within 30 feet of the heartfire fanner, and one additional target for every three heartfire fanner and bard levels the character possesses.

The duration of any one spell, or any one extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like ability affecting the targets of prolonged passion is increased by 1 round per point of Charisma bonus of the heartfire fanner. The target of prolonged passion chooses which effect to extend when the heartfire fanner uses the ability. Thus, a raging barbarian targeted with prolonged passion by a fanner with a Charisma of 18 could rage for an additional 4 rounds, and a fighter under the effects of a *haste* spell would retain the benefits of that spell for an additional 4 rounds. Likewise, the effects of another type of bardic music (such as inspire courage) can be extended.

Only creatures currently under the effects of an effect with a duration can gain any benefit of prolonged passion. If the extended effect ends prematurely (through *dispel magic*, for example), prolonged passion no longer has any effect.

The heartfire fanner must perform for 1 round and be heard by his targets for the song to take effect. Prolonged passion is a mind-affecting ability. Prolonged passion is considered bardic music, so using this ability takes up one use of the heartfire fanner's bardic music for the day. The heartfire fanner cannot target himself with this ability.

HEARTFIRE FANNER ADVANCEMENT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Bardic music, inspired fight (1 feat)	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Magic flare (1 level)	+1 level of existing class
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Bolster courage, inspired fight (2 feats)	+1 level of existing class
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Magic flare (2 levels)	+1 level of existing class
5	+3	+1	+4	+4	Prolonged passion, inspired fight (3 feats)	+1 level of existing class

DUST to DUST

MAGIC OF THE Earthborn

by Ari Marmell • illustrated by Michael Phillippi

Many fantasy cultures—and many D&D campaigns—emphasize the power of the elements in their magical and religious systems. Fire mages blast their enemies from the field, devotees of the wind fly overhead on the wings of the storm, and the ocean's disciples dive deep to visit unknown civilizations and find sunken treasures. Yet none of these wielders of elemental power could exist without the earth on which they stand. Fire burns, wind soars, and the sea consumes, but earth supports and abides, forming the foundation upon which all else is built.

Although many view earth magic as less grand and flashy than other kinds of elemental magic, in truth it is just as powerful as the other three forms. This article presents multiple tools for incorporating the often underutilized and underestimated element of earth into your campaign setting. From an organization devoted to the worship of elemental earth, to new spells, items, and a new monster—all these aspects of earth magic can expand the horizons of your campaign and its characters.

THE EARTHBORN

Duron Kavaros, a dissatisfied cleric, founded the organization known as the Earthborn some 700 years ago. Kavaros spent much of his life serving in various priesthoods, switching deities periodically because no god seemed to grant him the spiritual completeness he desired. After many years of angst, Kavaros became convinced that his inability to find an appropriate deity stemmed from the fact that the greatest god of all had been forgotten. He came to believe that the earth itself—the foundation of the entire world—was a divine entity greater than any god could possibly be. The sun rises and sets, the moon waxes and wanes, the weather changes, and the tides go in and out, but earth alone is constant. Thus, he chose to devote his life to creating and maintaining an earth-based cult.

Kavaros gathered a congregation devoted not merely to the worship of elemental earth (though that was, of course, its primary focus) but also to finding a means of awakening and contacting the Earthen King, as Kavaros called his slumbering elemental lord. Calling themselves the Earthborn (or sometimes the Children of the Earthen King or the Sons of Stone), the sect's members devoted themselves to finding some means—natural or otherwise—of awakening the earth itself. Only then, they believed, could the rightful god of all things resume his place and make the world whole. With his ascension, earth would become dominant over all other, less stable forces, and chaos and evil would be banished forever.

Although they have not yet succeeded at their goal, the Earthborn continue to work toward it with passion equal to what their first leader displayed. In the process of trying to awaken the Earthen King, they have created a wide range of new spells, magic items, and techniques utilizing the incredible power of earth magic.

The EARTHBORN

The Earthborn (Medium): AL LN; 80,000 gp resource limit (see below); Membership 225; Integrated (human 113, gnome 57, dwarf 34, other 21).

Authority Figure: Tahrro Feyn, male human Clr 15.

Important Characters: Darezza Vadóon, female human transmuter 13; Mardnen Turel, female gnome Mnk 7; Harudniekt, male stone giant.

Others: Mixed; Clr 7 (1), Clr 3 (2), Clr 1 (68), Exp 1 (7), Mnk 3 (1), Mnk 1 (38), Drd 2 (1), Drd 1 (21), Ftr 3 (1), Ftr 1 (10), Rgr 2 (1), Rgr 1 (14), Wiz 6 (1), Wiz 3 (2), Wiz 1 (31), other (21).

Size and Resources

The Earthborn is a small cult, but a wealthy one. Due to its members' affinity for stones, their alliances with creatures of earth, and their practice of traveling regularly to the Elemental Plane of Earth, they have access to gems, metals, and other riches far in excess of those available to other groups of similar size. These additional funds are reflected in statistics given in the sidebar.

Alignment

The Earthborn is a lawful neutral organization. Its leaders prefer to avoid accepting chaotic or overtly evil members, but they accept any creatures with the earth subtype, so long as they agree to support the sect's goals and activities.

Membership

Much to the surprise of many, dwarves and druids, although certainly present in the Earthborn, represent at most a significant minority of its membership. While the dogma of the sect appeals to a few druids, most do not share the faith's emphasis on earth over other aspects of nature. And while some dwarves find the precepts of the faith appealing, most

see stone as something to be worked and treasured, not worshiped or revered. A great many monstrous earth creatures have been welcomed into the organization as favored children of the supreme element, and the Earthborn often take steps to defend creatures of earth—even those that are not members—when they are attacked.

Members of the Earthborn believe that all their powers and abilities—even class features or racial traits they share with others of their kind—derive from earth and stone. Monks, for instance, think of their *ki strike* and unarmed damage abilities as borrowing the strength of the rock. They interpret their resistances as the stability of stone, their extra speed and ability to fall slowly as asking the earth to assist their movements, and so forth. Even though not all the spells cast by wizards, clerics, and druids within the organization are earth-related, these spellcasters still maintain that the power for their magic flows from the earth beneath them.

The vast majority of the Earthborn are clerics. They typically choose from the Earth, Law, and Strength domains.

Earthborn Cosmology

The Earthborn reject the "standard" version of the cosmos, in which the Material Plane lies in the center of a ring formed by the four elemental planes, the Positive Energy Plane, and the Negative Energy Plane. According to them, the Elemental Plane of Earth lies at the very center of the Great Wheel, with the lesser elemental planes (Air, Fire, and Water), the two energy planes, and the Material Plane arrayed in a circle around it. Just as earth forms the foundation for the world, so the Elemental Plane of Earth forms the foundation of the multiverse.

The Earthborn consider the Elemental Plane of Earth the seat of divinity, the true home of the Earthen King (whose presence on the Material Plane represents only the barest portion of his essence), and the holiest of all places. Some members of the sect believe that the Elemental Plane of Earth *is* in fact the Earthen King, whose body and essence are so vast that they appear to form their own plane.

The Earthbound travel to the Elemental Plane of Earth frequently to partake of its bounty, to negotiate with various earth creatures, and to perform rituals intended to awaken the Earthen King. They believe, however, that it is blasphemy for any nonbeliever to travel there, so members of the cult resort to all manner of means—including violence—to prevent them from doing so. If they encounter any nonearth creatures that are not part of their organization within the Elemental Plane of Earth, they attack immediately.

SPELLS OF EARTH AND STONE

Some of the spells in this section were developed or discovered by the Earthborn; others were originally the province of gnomes, dwarves, or other earth-related sects. Whatever their origins, however, the Earthborn have access to all of these spells today, and they are the primary keepers of this lore.

Earthen Grace

Abjuration [Earth]
Level: Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 min./level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You grant the subject an affinity for earth and stone. Any damage the subject takes from a stone or earthen source counts as nonlethal damage for the duration of the spell. Natural attacks by creatures made of earth or stone (such as stone golems), natural attacks by creatures of the earth subtype, and attacks by stone weapons (such as a stone hammer or a sling stone) instead cause nonlethal damage, as does falling damage when the subject lands on rock or earth. When the nonlethal damage the subject has suffered (from any source) equals the subject's current hit points, the spell ends, and any further damage from a stone or earthen source causes damage normally.

Material Component: A 1 pound chunk of granite and 100 gp worth of powdered gemstone, which must be sprinkled on the target's skin.

Mountain Stance

Transmutation
Level: Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One creature
Duration: 1 min./level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: No

While this spell is in effect, the subject can root itself to the ground as a free action. Anyone attempting to grapple, lift, push, bull rush, overrun, throw, trip, or otherwise force the subject to move against its will through either physical or magical means must

FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

The Earthborn could easily function as allies or enemies—or possibly both—to a party of PCs. The cult's members actively hunt down and oppose evil creatures of elemental earth who refuse to work with them, considering them abominations that have turned against the Earthen King. Similarly, they oppose undead and creatures of the other three elements, viewing the former as unnatural and the latter as prideful creatures that have risen above their places. Additionally, the Earthborn constantly seek out new and more powerful spells in hopes of awakening their slumbering god, the Earthen King. They might well cooperate with PCs who also seek powerful magic, so long as an agreement specifying who receives what can be worked out in advance.

On the other hand, the Earthborn care little for the needs of others. If they locate a powerful magic item they wish to possess, or learn of an earth creature whose habitat is being destroyed by miners, they have no compunctions about using guile, intimidation, or even violence to obtain what they want. Furthermore, they constantly experiment with new magical rites intended to summon ever more powerful earth entities or to allow them to commune with their deity. They often choose the sites for such rituals based on geomantic principles, and if that means they must displace or even destroy an existing community to make room for an enormous *gate* or a major ceremony, so be it.

The Earthborn oppose most churches and priesthoods on general principles. This enmity is not so strong that they must attack clerics of other faiths on sight, but they do devote some energy to thwarting the goals of such priesthoods, be they good or evil. They believe that part of what prevents the Earthen King from awakening is the veneration most mortals give to the "lesser" deities of the pantheon, so they seek to discredit those deities whenever possible.

succeed on either a Strength check (in the case of physical manipulation) or a caster level check (in the case of magical manipulation). The DC for either check is 12 + your caster level. If at any point such an effort succeeds and the subject is forced to move, the spell ends immediately. Any voluntary movement on the subject's part does not end the spell, and the subject may "re-root" itself elsewhere in the same manner as described above.

Stonemantle

Transmutation [Earth]
Level: Clr 2, Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One Tiny object per caster level
Duration: 10 min./level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless, object)
Spell Resistance: No

This spell grants the resilience of stone to weaker objects. You may affect one Tiny or smaller object, or an equivalent number of larger objects per caster level. A Small object counts as 2 Tiny objects, a Medium object counts as 4, a Large object counts as 8, a Huge object counts as 16, a Gargantuan object counts as 32, and a Colossal object counts as 64. The hardness of an object affected by this spell becomes 8, and its has 15 hit points per inch of thickness. If the object to be affected has greater hardness or more hit points, use the better value. The DC to break the object increases by +5 unless the spell did not increase the object's hardness. The surface of an affected object takes on a faint, dull-gray tint, but its appearance does not otherwise change.

Material Component: A small amount of powdered marble.

Tremor

Evocation [Earth]
Level: Clr 3, Drd 3
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Area: 40-ft.-radius spread
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: No

When you cast this spell, a small, localized tremor shakes the ground in the area. This minor quake is not strong enough to damage structures. The effects last 1 round, during which any spellcaster on the ground must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) or lose any spell she is casting. A creature attempting to use a skill that would provoke an attack of opportunity (such as Disable Device, Heal, Open Lock, and Use Rope, among others) must succeed at a DC 15 Concentration check or the action automatically fails and is wasted. Each creature in the area must make a Reflex save or be knocked prone and stunned for 1 round. Creatures immune to stunning that fail the save are knocked prone but not stunned.

FEATS OF EARTH

The Earthborn and other devotees of elemental earth have developed several new feats (or perhaps rediscovered old ones) that draw upon the earth around them and reflect their spiritual bond with it.

EARTHCRAFT [GENERAL]

You have an innate understanding of stone, both natural and worked.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Knowledge (architecture and engineering) and Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks.

EARTH FOCUS [GENERAL]

You are particularly adept at casting earth-related spells.

Benefit: The save DC for any spell with the earth descriptor that you cast increases by +1. For spells of this category that allow no save, the effective caster level increases by +1 instead. This increase stacks with all similar benefits, such as that of Spell Focus.

FRIEND OF EARTH [GENERAL]

You get along well with creatures of earth and stone.

Prerequisite: Devotee of elemental earth, member of the Earthborn or a similar earth-focused sect or organization.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on any Charisma-based checks made to influence an earth creature. This benefit applies with respect to all creatures of elemental earth, all creatures with the earth subtype, and even stone constructs that possess Intelligence scores. You also gain a +2 bonus on Charisma-based checks made to influence any creature that is associated with earth and stone but lacks the appropriate subtype (such as dwarves).

MAGIC ITEMS OF ELEMENTAL EARTH

Most of these items are creations of the Earthborn, but a few predate that organization.

Boots of Stability

Upon command as a free action, these boots root the wearer to the ground, as though with the *mountain stance* spell (see above). The boots root the wearer for a total of 10 rounds per day. The duration of this effect need not be consecutive rounds. In addition, the boots provide the wearer with a +5 competence bonus on any Balance or Climb checks; this effect is always active.

Faint transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *mountain stance;* Price 9,850 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

Clay of Sculpting

Upon command, this fist-sized lump of gray clay can be stretched and molded into an object of any size up to Medium. The clay follows the vision of the user, helping the user mold itself into a perfect likeness of the object the user desires to create. The sculpting of the object takes 1 full round plus 1 full round per each size category the desired object is larger than Tiny. Interruptions in this process leave the clay at the point it was left; with use of the command word, the process can be continued or the user can chose to begin the process anew. When the sculpting is finished, the *clay of sculpting* turns into a solid stone version of the object created. It remains in this form until a second command word is spoken or until the formed object is broken or destroyed, whereupon it reverts to a fist-sized lump of clay.

Moderate transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *stone shape, transmute mud to rock;* Price 20,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Ring of Earth's Grasp

This ring enhances the wearer's grip with each hand. The wearer gains a +4 bonus on Climb checks, grapple checks, checks to resist being disarmed, and any other Strength-based checks for which grip is a factor.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *bull's strength;* Price 10,000 gp; Weight —.

Staff of Earthen Might

This staff is carved from stone and tipped with either a gem or an intricately sculpted chunk of marble. It allows the use of the following spells:

- *Soften earth and stone* (1 charge)
- *Stone shape* (1 charge)
- *Tremor* (1 charges)
- *Transmute mud to rock* (2 charges)
- *Transmute rock to mud* (2 charges)

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *soften earth and stone, stone shape, tremor, transmute mud to rock, transmute rock to mud;* Price 46,406 gp.

NEW MONSTER

The following creature was discovered on the Elemental Plane of Earth by a member of the Earthborn many years ago.

Creeping Stone

Large Ooze (Earth, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 6d10+36 (69 hp)
Initiative: -5
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), burrow 20 ft., climb 10 ft.
AC: 4 (-1 size, -5 Dex), touch 4, flat-footed 4
Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+12
Attack: Slam +7 melee (2d4+6 plus slow)
Full Attack: Slam +7 melee (2d4+6 plus slow)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Constrict 2d4+6, engulf, improved grab, petrification, slow
Special Qualities: Blindsight 60 ft., earth glide, ooze traits, tremorsense 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +8, Ref -3, Will -3
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 1, Con 22, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1
Skills: Climb +12, Hide -9*
Feats: –
Environment: Elemental Plane of Earth
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 6
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 7-12 (Large); 13-18 (Huge)
Level Adjustment: –

A portion of the rock slides off the cave wall, as though suddenly turned to some viscous liquid. Slowly but inevitably, it creeps across the chamber.

Creeping stone is a form of ooze native to the Elemental Plane of Earth. Sages do not know precisely how it first appeared on the Material Plane, although it seems possible that the Earthborn brought it back with them at some point. Whether or not the Earthborn deliberately introduced these creatures to the Material Plane, clerics of that organization with access to the Earth domain now routinely use creeping stones as guardians, controlling them via their ability to rebuke earth creatures.

On its home plane, a creeping stone draws nutrients directly from the surrounding rock. On the Material Plane, however, it must feed by consuming organic materials, which it replaces with a calcified waste substance formed by its own body. The net effect of this process is the petrification of its victims.

The average creeping stone is about 10 feet in diameter and about 6 inches thick. It seems likely, however, that much larger specimens exist on the Elemental Plane of Earth.

Combat

The creeping stone remains hidden within stone or among boulders while it waits for prey. When it senses movement, it attacks.

Constrict (Ex): On a successful grapple check, a creeping stone deals 2d4+6 points of damage. Furthermore, each round of constriction requires a new saving throw against the creeping stone's slow ability (see below).

Earth Glide (Ex): A creeping stone can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole and does not create any ripple or other sign of its presence. A *move earth* spell cast on an area containing a burrowing creeping stone flings the creature back 30 feet, stunning it for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.

Engulf (Ex): Although it moves slowly, a creeping stone can simply mow down Medium or smaller creatures as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. The creeping stone merely has to move over the opponents, affecting as many as it can cover. Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the creeping stone, but if they do, they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed at a DC 17 Reflex save or be engulfed; on a success, the creature is pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the creeping stone moves forward. A victim already grappled by the creeping stone receives no save against an engulf attempt. The save DC is Strength-based.

Engulfed creatures are considered grappled and trapped within the creeping stone's body. Such a creature is subject to the creeping stone's slow and petrification attacks and must attempt a new save against each for every round in which it remains engulfed.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a creeping stone must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Petrification (Ex): An engulfed creature must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save or instantly turn to stone. Success means the creature must save again each round until it either fails or is no longer engulfed in the creeping stone. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Slow (Ex): Though a creeping stone requires long-term contact to actually consume or petrify a victim, a simple touch allows the first stage of the process to begin. Any creature struck by the creeping stone (or that touches it with bare flesh) must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or be affected as though by a *slow* spell for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +5 racial bonus.

Skills: A creeping stone has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened. *A creeping stone has a +25 racial bonus on Hide checks made in rocky or underground environments.

MASTERS of the FOUR WINDS

THE MYSTERIES OF *Air* MAGIC

by David Noonan ◆ illustrated by Marc Sasso

Perched atop a forbidding peak in a vast mountain range, the Palace of the Four Winds is home to an esoteric order of monks dedicated to changing the world like a breeze bends every blade of grass—by applying force, but remaining unseen.

A powerful elf named Kiu-Shanat came to the mountaintop to meditate some 500 years ago, and he's remained ever since. At first, he acted as an oracle, answering seemingly intractable questions for anyone brave enough to dare the perils of the mountain journey. Eventually he attracted disciples of his own, and, in his words, "The puff of air from my lips has gained strength as it went down the mountain, fluttering the hearts of many, just as a zephyr flutters the riverside reeds."

The palace itself, built two centuries ago by a team of high-level masters of the east wind, looks like a castle whose minarets and towers have been replaced with windmills. The denizens of the palace have harnessed the power of the wind to operate elevators, water pumps, bellows for forced-air heat, and dozens of other applications. Keeping the palace running requires constant adjustments to the wind vanes and propellers so they aren't ruined by too much wind or left idle by too little wind.

Today, about a hundred of Kiu-Shanat's followers are at the Palace of the Four Winds; another two hundred wander the world, trying to advance the causes of charity and freedom wherever they can. Single-class monks, most of fairly low level, make up about half the order, while the rest have levels in one of the four prestige classes outlined below.

Joining the Order of the Four Winds is straightforward, but it isn't easy. Applicants must climb the mountain to the Palace of the Four Winds unaided, braving both fierce weather, sheer cliffs, and the unfriendly creatures who call the lower reaches of the mountain home. Those who reach the Palace are administered a rigorous written exam on moral issues and an even more rigorous test of their martial arts ability. Those who pass both tests become members of the order and can take further tests to become masters.

The Order of the Four Winds acts to prevent disorder and suffering on a grand scale, acting proactively whenever it can. Kiu-Shanat is currently sending masters of the south wind to infiltrate the many factions that threaten to tear one particular nation apart, for example, so he'll have agents in place who can head off a civil war or at least reduce its severity. The masters of the west wind are searching for a multipart artifact that can cause massive earthquakes. The masters of the east wind are fighting a covert war with a cult that wants to open a permanent portal to the Lower Planes, and the masters of the north wind are keeping the peace on the long border between two warring nations that recently agreed to a cease-fire. The order has about a dozen smaller objectives for which it uses mixed teams, lower-level monks, and even non-monk allies and good-hearted adventurers.

ORDER of the FOUR WINDS

The following stat block represents the members of the order likely to be present in the palace at any given moment.

Order of the Four Winds (Medium): LG; 20,000 gp; Membership 70; Integrated (human 40, half-elf 20, elf 15, dwarf 12, half-orc 5, halfling 4, gnome 2, monster 2, guardian naga).

Authority Figures: Kiu-Shanat, male elf Clr 9/Mnk 20; Karellian the Whisperer, male human Clr 5/Mnk 5/master of the west wind 10; Liu Shu the Scarred, female human Mnk 5/Asn 5/master of the south wind 10; Zothor the Puissant, male human Mnk 5/Sor 6/master of the east wind 10; Galyerian, male half-elf Drd 5/Mnk 5/master of the north wind 3; Nachipetakal, female couatl Clr 10.

Important Characters: Arbaleon, male adult silver dragon; Kourak Providus, male human Clr 12 (religious leader); Goliera, female elf Ftr 4/Mnk 11 (unarmed combat instructor); Thau Ke, male half-orc Mnk 11 (meditation instructor); Alarak the Bearded, male dwarf Ftr 7 (armed combat instructor); Iliesha, female elf Wiz 7/Loremaster 6 (scholarly professor).

Others: Mixed: Clr 6, Clr 3 (2), Clr 1 (4), Com 1 (15), couatl, Exp 3, Exp 1, Ftr 3 (2), Ftr 1 (4), guardian naga, Mnk 5, Mnk 2 (2), Mnk 1 (20), Wiz 6, Wiz 3 (2).

MASTER OF THE NORTH WIND

Masters of the north wind are the least likely group to spend much time at the Palace of the Four Winds; Kiu-Shanat bids them live by the following credo: "Shake the leaves from the forest trees, bend the grasses of the plains as you pass, and leave seafoam on the water behind you." Inveterate travelers, masters of the north wind are comfortable spending months or even years away from the comforts of civilization.

Druidic training is practically a prerequisite for master of the north wind training, as is the martial arts prowess of the monk. In a fight, the master of the north wind has the fierce countenance of an animal fighting for its life, but his movements have the serene grace of a trained monk.

Thakaula the Manyshaper (female elf Drd 5/Mnk 5/master of the north wind 10) is the head of the masters of the north wind, but she hasn't been seen for more than a year. While it's not unusual for a master of the north wind to spend a year away from the palace, Thakaula is aware of her greater responsibilities to the order. Her second-in-command—and only child—Galyerian (male half-elf Drd 5/Mnk 5/master of the north wind 3) has heard rumors that she's been captured by an evil cabal of druid-fiends. In the short term, Galyerian is gathering a team to check out the rumors, and he'll mount a rescue effort if the tales prove true.

Another major effort for the masters of the north wind is helping to maintain a shaky cease-fire between two warring nations. Both sides are controlled by feudal warlords who are largely independent from the monarchs who came to peace, and some warlords are plotting revenge attacks against their rivals on the other side. The masters of the north wind and their allies must patrol the border to make sure no warlord crosses it, and they are trying to spy on the more powerful and unscrupulous lords to find out what they have planned.

MASTER OF THE NORTH WIND REQUIREMENTS

Hit Die D8

To qualify to become a master of the north wind, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast 3rd-level divine spells.

Climb: 10 ranks.

Other: Ki strike (magic) class feature, ability to change shape into a flying creature.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

MASTER OF THE NORTH WIND CLASS SKILLS

The master of the north wind's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.
Dex: Balance, Hide, Move Silently.
Con: Concentration.
Int: Knowledge (nature), Spellcraft.
Wis: Listen, Profession, Spot, Survival.
Cha: Diplomacy.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the master of the north wind prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The master of the north wind gains no weapon or armor proficiencies.

Monk Abilities: A master of the north wind's class levels stack with her monk levels for the purpose of determining her unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus. If a master of the north wind doesn't have monk levels prior to becoming a master of the north wind, she gains the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus of a monk of a level equal to her master of the north wind level.

Spells per Day: When a new master of the north wind level is gained (except 6th), the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in whatever divine spellcasting class in which she could cast 3rd-level spells before she added the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (more frequent wild shapes, for example). If a character had more than one divine spellcasting class in which she could cast 3rd-level spells before she became a master of the north wind, she must decide to which class she adds each level of master of the north wind for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Wild Shape: Starting at 2nd level, a master of the north wind improves her ability to wild shape. Half her master of the north wind levels (rounded down) stack with her druid levels to determine how often she can wild shape and into which forms. Masters of the north wind who could not previously wild shape gain the ability to wild shape as a 5th-level druid when they become 2nd-level masters of the north wind, then improve at the same rate less the first level (wild shaping as a 6th-level druid when they become 3rd-level masters of the north wind, for example).

At 6th level, a master of the north wind can expend one of her wild shape uses that day to take on a gaseous shape. This functions like the *gaseous form* spell from a caster of the master of the north wind's class level, except that it expends a wild shape use and the master of the north wind can affect only herself. Unlike other uses of the wild shape class feature, taking a gaseous shape is considered a spell-like ability.

Air Domain: A master of the north wind who reaches 10th level is granted access to the Air domain. In the likely event that she has druid levels rather than cleric levels, the master of the north wind can cast an extra spell per day of each spell level she has access to, which must be the spell from the Air domain for that level. She uses the Air domain's granted power, substituting her

MASTER OF THE NORTH WIND ADVANCEMENT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+2	+0	+0	Monk abilities	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+3	+0	+0	Wild shape	+1 level of existing class
3	+2	+3	+1	+1	–	+1 level of existing class
4	+3	+4	+1	+1	–	+1 level of existing class
5	+3	+4	+1	+1	–	+1 level of existing class
6	+4	+5	+2	+2	Wild shape (gaseous)	–
7	+5	+5	+2	+2	–	+1 level of existing class
8	+6	+6	+2	+2	–	+1 level of existing class
9	+6	+6	+3	+3	–	+1 level of existing class
10	+7	+7	+3	+3	Air domain	+1 level of existing class

master of the north wind levels for cleric levels.

MASTER OF THE SOUTH WIND

The secret agents among Kiu-Shanat's followers, masters of the south wind excel at espionage, sabotage, and other cloak-and-dagger jobs. They aren't assassins, and they won't poison a foe or strike her dead from the shadows. When they do their missions well, no one knows they were there. Kiu-Shanat commanded them, "Be as unobtrusive as the warm summer breeze, always welcome but beneath notice and beyond scrutiny."

Most masters of the south wind were once rogues, although a significant minority were once bards who've adopted the mental discipline necessary to impress Kiu-Shanat. A few (including Liu Shu the Scarred, the senior master) are ex-assassins who have turned away from what Kiu-Shanat calls "the game of deceit and death" but still wish to ply their stealthy skills.

A warren of tunnels beneath the Palace of the Four Winds contains the training grounds of the masters of the of the south wind. They often build obstacle courses to test the mettle and skill of junior members, and some capture monsters to make their training efforts more "realistic."

When stealth is at a premium, Kiu-Shanat sends masters of the south wind to do the Order's bidding. Many adopt cover identities that they maintain for months or years. As a result, they can be found nearly anywhere from a noble court to a merchant caravan to a thieves' den.

Many of the masters of the south wind are engaged in a major "social engineering" effort: an attempt to avoid a civil war by infiltrating every faction. Some factions are rendered ineffective with sabotage from within, while other disguised masters of the south wind advocate peace and tolerance. Coordinating more than a hundred secret agents in the field is straining the masters of the south wind to the limit; sometimes incognito masters have come to blows on behalf of their factions, not realizing each other's true identities.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the master of the south wind prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The master of the south wind gains no weapon or armor proficiencies.

Monk Abilities: A master of the south wind's class levels stack with his monk levels for the purpose of determining his unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus. If a master of the south wind doesn't have monk levels prior to becoming a master of the south wind, he gains the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus of a monk of a level equal to his master of the south wind level.

Spells: Beginning at 1st level, a master of the south wind gains the ability to cast a small number of arcane spells. To cast a spell, the master of the south wind must have a Charisma score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a master of the south wind with a Charisma of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. A master of the south wind's bonus spells are based on Charisma, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the master's Charisma modifier (if any). When the master of the south wind gets 0 spells of a given level, such as 0 1st-level spells at 1st level, the master of the south wind gets only bonus spells. A master of the south wind without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level. A master of the south wind prepares and casts spells just as a bard does.

Upon reaching 6th level, and at every even-numbered level after that (8th and 10th), a master of the south wind can choose to learn a new spell in place of one he already knows, just as a bard does.

Spells Known: The master of the south wind knows a certain number of spells dependent on his level. He may choose from the following spells at each level.

1st Level: *Disguise self, endure elements, entropic shield, feather fall, ghost sound, jump, obscuring mist, sleep.*

2nd Level: *Cat's grace, darkness, eagle's splendor, fog cloud, gust of wind, invisibility, pass without trace, spider climb, stolen breath*, whispering wind, wind wall.*

3rd Level: *Capricious zephyr*, deep slumber, deeper darkness, gaseous form, misdirection, nondetection, updraft*.*

Hit Die D6

MASTER OF THE SOUTH WIND REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a master of the south wind, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Climb: 10 ranks.

Disguise: 10 ranks.

Hide: 10 ranks.

Move Silently: 10 ranks.

Other: Ki strike (magic) class feature, uncanny dodge class feature.

Alignment: Lawful good or lawful neutral.

Special: Must complete an obstacle course devised by senior masters of the south wind, which includes traps, guards that must be eluded, monsters to be fought, and other hazards. A typical obstacle course has five or six CR 7 encounters. They're designed to limit the lethal danger, but accidents have been known to happen.

MASTER OF THE SOUTH WIND CLASS SKILLS

The master of the south wind's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump.

Dex: Balance, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, Tumble.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Forgery, Disable Device, Search, Spellcraft.

Wis: Listen, Profession, Spot.

Cha: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise.

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

MASTER OF THE SOUTH WIND ADVANCEMENT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day 1	2	3	4	Spells Known 1	2	3	4
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Monk abilities	0	—	—	—	2*	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Sneak attack +1d6	1	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	—	1	0	—	—	3	2*	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +2d6	1	1	—	—	4	3	—	—
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Air domain	1	1	0	—	4	3	2*	—
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Sneak attack +3d6	1	1	1	—	4	4	3	—
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	—	2	1	1	0	4	4	3	2*
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Sneak attack +4d6	2	1	1	1	4	4	4	3
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	—	2	2	1	1	4	4	4	3
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Sneak attack +5d6	2	2	2	1	4	4	4	4

*Provided the master of the south wind has sufficient Charisma to have a bonus spell of this level.

4th Level: *Air walk, clairaudience/clairvoyance, cyclonic blast*, dimension door, freedom of movement, greater invisibility, modify memory.*

*See the Air Spells section.

Sneak Attack: If a master of the south wind can catch an opponent when she is unable to defend herself effectively from his attack, he can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Basically, any time the master of the south wind's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (whether she actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the master of the south wind flanks the target, the master of the south wind's attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by +1d6 points every other level (+2d6 at 3rd level, +3d6 at 5th level, and so on). Should the master of the south wind score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied. This ability otherwise works exactly like the rogue ability of the same name.

Air Domain: A master of the south wind who reaches 5th level is granted access to the Air domain. In the likely event that he doesn't have cleric levels, the master of the south wind adds the domain spells to his list of master of the south wind known spells, in addition to the character's normal number. The master of the south wind casts these spells as arcane spells. This does not allow the master of the south wind to cast spells of a higher level than 4th, but he can employ spell completion items that cast those the higher level spells. He uses the Air domain's granted power, substituting his master of the south wind levels for cleric levels.

MASTER OF THE EAST WIND

The masters of the east wind are the arcanists among Kiu-Shanat's followers; he has bid them, "Grow in your control of magic and marshal its power, just as the winds gather before the storm." Masters of the east wind spend a fair amount of time in the laboratories and libraries of the Palace of the Four Winds, but they also cross the globe on missions involving arcane lore.

Wizard/monks are slightly more prevalent among the masters of the east wind than sorcerer/monks. In the past, the Order has welcomed bards who've adopted the lawful alignment to become monks and then masters of the east wind, although there are none in the membership at present.

The libraries and laboratories of the Palace of the Four Winds are busy places, with masters of the east wind training in the martial arts, studying eldritch tomes, and creating magic items. They are particularly fond of *monk's belts, ioun stones,* and *carpets of flying.* At some point in their careers, nearly all masters of the east wind create for themselves an intelligent *carpet of flying* that flies of its own accord like a steed, freeing them to cast spells and take other actions.

Masters of the east wind excel in missions involving powerful magic, especially where illusions and enchantments are useful. Many use their magic to keep a secret society from opening a permanent *portal* from the Lower Planes through which a horde of fiends would emerge. That means breaking up sacrificial rites, cleansing abandoned ruins of fell influences, and bringing members of the secret society (many of whom are highly placed nobles and merchants) to justice.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the master of the east wind prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The master of the east wind gains no weapon or armor proficiencies.

Monk Abilities: A master of the east wind's class levels stack with her monk levels for the purpose of determining her unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus. If a master of the east wind doesn't have monk levels prior to becoming a master of the east wind, she gains the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus of a monk of a level equal to her master of the east wind level.

Hit Die D6

MASTER OF THE EAST WIND REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a master of the east wind, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

Climb: 10 ranks.

Other: Ki strike (magic) class feature.

Alignment: Lawful good or lawful neutral.

MASTER OF THE EAST WIND CLASS SKILLS

The master of the east wind's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump.

Dex: Balance, Hide, Move Silently.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Knowledge (arcana), Spellcraft.

Wis: Listen, Profession, Spot.

Cha: Diplomacy.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Spells per Day: When a new master of the east wind level is gained, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in whatever arcane spellcasting class in which she could cast 3rd-level spells before she added the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus feats, for example). If a character had more than one arcane spellcasting class in which she could cast 3rd-level spells before she became a master of the east wind, she must decide to which class she adds each level of master of the east wind for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Familiar: Starting at 2nd level, a master of the east wind improves the effectiveness of her familiar. Half her

MASTER OF THE EAST WIND ADVANCEMENT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Monk abilities	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Familiar	+1 level of existing class
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	—	+1 level of existing class
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	—	+1 level of existing class
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Air domain	+1 level of existing class
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing class
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing class
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	—	+1 level of existing class
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	—	+1 level of existing class
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	—	+1 level of existing class

MASTER OF THE WEST WIND ADVANCEMENT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Monk abilities	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Turn undead	+1 level of existing class
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	–	+1 level of existing class
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	–	+1 level of existing class
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Air domain	+1 level of existing class
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	–	+1 level of existing class
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	–	+1 level of existing class
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	–	+1 level of existing class
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	–	+1 level of existing class
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	–	+1 level of existing class

master of the east wind levels (rounded down) stack with her wizard or sorcerer levels to determine the abilities her familiar has (described in the Familiars section of Chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook*). Masters of the east wind who didn't previously have the ability to summon a familiar gain the ability when they become 2nd-level masters of the east wind, then improve at the same rate (gaining the familiar abilities of a 3rd-level wizard when they become 6th-level masters of the east wind, for example).

Air Domain: A master of the east wind who reaches 5th level is granted access to the Air domain. In the likely event that she has wizard or sorcerer levels rather than cleric levels, the master of the east wind adds the domain spells to her spells known—scribed in a wizard's spellbook, or added to a sorcerer or bard's list of known spells, in addition to the character's normal number. The master of the east wind casts these spells as arcane spells. She can use the Air domain's granted power, substituting her master of the east wind levels for cleric levels.

MASTER OF THE WEST WIND

Kiu-Shanat simply bade the masters of the west wind, "Listen to the wind, whether it rustles gently or storms mightily. Then do as it does." Based on this cryptic credo (which Kiu-Shanat has refused to eludicate further), the masters of the west wind regard themselves as guardians of freedom, acting to make sure everyone has the freedom that the wind enjoys. Different masters of the west wind emphasize different sorts of freedom: One might uphold freedom of movement, while another might strive for freedom from suffering. Moreso than the other categories of master, masters of the west wind cling to the religious and philosophical beliefs they held before they came to the Palace of the Four Winds. Kiu-Shanat's teachings to the masters of the west wind supplement the dictates of their gods; they don't replace them.

Clerics who worship deities of good and law such as Heironeous and St. Cuthbert are the most likely masters of the west wind, along with the occasional follower of Wee Jas and a number of clerics who don't worship a specific deity.

Masters of the west wind stand apart from their more order-minded brethren, and in fact the clergy of Heironeous and St. Cuthbert often regard them as heretics. The church of St. Cuthbert, for example, excommunicates any cleric who visits the Palace of the Four Winds, and its priests challenge masters wherever both are present. Simultaneously upholding the ideals of law and freedom is a tricky balancing act, and thus masters of the west wind are likely to consult with each other and with Kiu-Shanat before undertaking a mission. Masters of the west wind are often present—though rarely obtrusive—wherever there's a struggle for freedom or humanitarian crisis that Kiu-Shanat knows about.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the master of the west wind prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The master of the west wind gains no weapon or armor proficiencies.

Monk Abilities: A master of the west wind's class levels stack with his monk levels for the purpose of determining his unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus. If a master of the west wind doesn't have monk levels prior to becoming a master of the west wind, he gains the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus of a monk of a level equal to his master of the west wind level.

Hit Die D8

MASTER OF THE WEST WIND REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a master of the west wind, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast 3rd-level divine spells

Climb: 10 ranks.

Other: Ki strike (magic) class feature, ability to turn undead.

Alignment: Lawful good or lawful neutral.

MASTER OF THE WEST WIND CLASS SKILLS

The master of the west wind's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump.
Dex: Balance, Hide, Move Silently.
Con: Concentration.
Int: Knowledge (religion), Spellcraft.
Wis: Listen, Profession, Sense Motive.
Cha: Diplomacy, Spot.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Spells per Day: When a new master of the west wind level is gained, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in whatever divine spellcasting class in which he could cast 3rd-level spells before he added the prestige class level. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If a character had more than one divine spellcasting class in which he could cast 3rd-level spells before he became a master of the west wind, he must decide to which class he adds each level of master of the west wind for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Turn Undead: Starting at 2nd level, a master of the west wind improves his ability to turn undead. Half his master of the west wind levels (rounded down) stack with his cleric levels to determine how well he can turn undead.

Air Domain: A master of the west wind who reaches 5th level is granted access to the Air domain, which gives an additional granted power and offers one more spell option for the character to choose as a domain spell.

AIR SPELLS

The following spells all share the Air descriptor and some connection to wind or breathing. Spellcasters affiliated with the Palace of the Four Winds created

many of them after traveling to the Elemental Plane of Air and making careful study of the magical forces they found there. The sojourn to the Elemental Plane of Air was so productive that it fostered the creation of a new spellcasting order: the masters of the south wind.

Cyclonic Blast

Evocation [Air]
Level: Sor/Wiz 5, Master of the South Wind 4
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Area: Line extending to maximum range
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: Yes

You send a twisting torrent of wind, not unlike a tornado turned on its side, toward your enemies. The *cyclonic blast* deals 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 15d6 points of damage) to all creatures and most objects. Objects bigger than Large take half damage. The cyclonic blast begins at your fingertips.

Creatures who fail their Reflex saving throws against the *cyclonic blast* are additionally in danger of being knocked back by the force of the wind. Treat this as a bull rush attack with the blast having a +12 bonus on the Strength check. The *cyclonic blast* always moves with the opponent to push that target back the full distance allowed, and it has no speed limit. Airborne creatures are treated as if they were one size category smaller for the purpose of resisting the bull rush.

If the damage caused to an interposing barrier by the blast shatters or breaks through it, the *cyclonic blast* may continue beyond the barrier if the spell's range permits; otherwise, it stops at the barrier just as any other spell effect does.

Focus: A child's spinning top.

Eye of the Hurricane

Abjuration [Air]
Level: Drd 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Area: 40-ft.-radius emanation centered on you, with 10-ft.-radius quiet area centered on you
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (see text)
Spell Resistance: Yes

With this spell, you create a swirling mini-storm that provides a measure of protection, but leaves you and those near you unaffected.

The storm that surrounds you has hurricane-force winds spinning in a circle with you at the center. Normal ranged attacks through the hurricane's windy area are impossible, and even heavier projectiles such as siege weapons and giant boulders suffer a -8 attack penalty.

Creatures who move inside the spell's area suffer effects depending on their size and whether they're airborne.

Medium or Smaller Creatures: Succeed at a Fortitude save or be knocked 1d4x10 feet away from the eye of the hurricane's center and take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per 10 feet. Creatures blown away are knocked prone as well. Flying creatures are blown back 2d6x10 feet and take 2d6 points of nonlethal damage.

Large Creatures: Succeed at a Fortitude save or be knocked prone by the force of the wind. Flying creatures are instead blown back 1d6x10 feet.

Huge Creatures: Succeed at a Fortitude save or be checked. Flying creatures are instead blown back 1d6x5 feet.

Gargantuan and Colossal creatures can move through the spell area without adverse consequences. Even creatures that make their saving throws must attempt them again whenever they start a turn inside the spell area or whenever they move back into it.

The spell area is effectively a sphere. Although the spell area is centered on you, you're not within the wind. If you move, the eye of the hurricane moves as well to keep you in the center. If you cast *eye of the hurricane* so that creatures are inside the eye when the spell begins, they must make Fortitude saves when your movement brings the area of wind upon them. Thereafter, if you move the spell area into a square occupied by another creature, that creature makes a Fortitude save at the beginning of its next turn (assuming the windy area of the spell is still on it).

Capricious Zephyr

Evocation [Air]
Level: Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3, Master of the South Wind 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: 5-ft.-diameter sphere
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial (see text)
Spell Resistance: Yes

You create a roiling ball of dust and gale-force winds that moves as you command, pushing your foes across the battlefield. From its starting point, the capricious zephyr moves 30 feet per round in the direction you point, regardless of the presence or absence of terrain. If the sphere enters a space with a creature, it stops moving for that round and tries to bowl the creature over with its wind force.

Medium or smaller creatures that fail their Fortitude saves must resist a bull rush attack from the capricious zephyr, which has a +6 bonus to the check. If the spell wins the bull rush, it pushes the creature as far as it can in a random direction (roll 1d8; 1 indicates a push into the square closest to the caster and 2 through 8 indicate the other squares, moving clockwise around the creature). Whether or not the saving throw succeeded, the spell then tries to knock the creature prone, using a trip attack with a +4 bonus to the check.

The *capricious zephyr* moves as long as you actively direct it (a move action for you). Otherwise, it merely stays at rest and attempts to bowl over anyone in its square. Creatures and objects size

NEW MAGIC ITEM

Intelligent Flying Carpet
Typical Master of the East Wind Carpet: *Carpet of flying* 5 ft. x 5 ft.; AL LN; Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 13; empathy; 60 ft. vision and hearing; Ego score 3.

Lesser Power: Item has 10 ranks in Spot (total modifier +11).

Personality: The carpet is content to soar high above the earth with its master atop it. It asks nothing more than the chance to cavort among the clouds every few days. When it bears its master into combat, the carpet generally makes two move actions, leaving the master of the east wind free to cast full-round spells, retrieve various wands and potions, and do other things he couldn't do if he had to direct the carpet as a move action.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *overland flight, permanency;* Price 27,000 gp; Weight 8 lb.

Large or bigger are unaffected by a capricious zephyr. The spell ends if the distance between the sphere and the caster ever exceeds the spell's range.

Updraft

Conjuration (Creation) [Air]
Level: Clr 3, Drd 3, Master of the South Wind 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 free action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 min./level (D)
Saving Throw: Reflex partial (see text)

Updraft conjures forth rushing air that propels you upward. You can set your initial altitude at up to 30 feet when you cast the spell. Thereafter, you can move up or down by 30 feet as a move action to a maximum altitude of 90 feet. You can move horizontally at up to 30 feet as a move action by angling the updraft toward your intended path of travel, but there's an element of risk if you do so. If you travel more than 10 feet per move action, you must succeed at a Reflex save to stay atop the *updraft* (DC equal to the distance in feet traveled with that move action). Attempt the save at the end of the move action; you fall off the column of air and sink to the ground if you fail. If you dismiss the spell, fall off the column, or if the *updraft* is dispelled, you descend 60 feet at the beginning of each of your turns, taking no damage when you reach the ground.

When you're atop an *updraft*, it's difficult to attack with a weapon because the winds are unstable. Your first attack has a -1 penalty on attack rolls, the second -2, and so on, to a maximum penalty of -5. A full round spent rebalancing yourself allows you to begin again at -1 with your next weapon attack.

Casting the *updraft* spell is a free action, like casting a quickened spell, and it counts toward the normal limit of one quickened spell per round. But unlike *feather fall*, you can't cast this spell if it isn't your turn.

Material Component: A miniature propeller or windmill.

Downdraft

Evocation [Air]
Level: Clr 5, Drd 5
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Effect: 100-foot-tall vertical column of rushing air filling the area beneath a 20-radius spread
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex partial (see text)
Spell Resistance: Yes

Downdraft sends a column of turbulent air rushing toward the earth. Airborne creatures caught in the area of a *downdraft* must succeed at a Reflex save or immediately plummet up to 100 feet straight downward, taking falling damage (1d6 points of damage per 10 feet fallen) if the *downdraft* makes them hit the ground or collide with an object. Those who succeed at the Reflex save plummet only 50 feet.

Creatures whose flight is supernatural in nature (such as the ravid) are immune to the effects of *downdraft*.

Creatures on the ground already must succeed at a Reflex save or be knocked prone by the spell; they apply their size modifier to grapple checks (-8 Tiny, -4 Small, +0 Medium, +4 Large, +8 Huge, and so on) as a modifier on the save.

Material Component: A balsa-wood bird-carving, which is crushed underfoot.

Stolen Breath

Necromancy [Air]
Level: Sor/Wiz 2, Master of the South Wind 2
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One living creature that breathes air
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

With this spell, you steal all the air from the subject's lungs, giving it a momentary respiratory crisis. If the subject fails the Fortitude save, it faces a choice at the start of his next turn. It can either take a full-round action to get its wind back, or it can take shallow breaths and act normally but be sickened (-2 penalty on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks) for 1d4 rounds.

Focus: A stoppered glass vial. D

FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

Altering these prestige classes for your campaign is easy. You can change their backgrounds and use them as is or alter the mechanics or requirements.

Master of the North Wind: This prestige class is a fairly straightforward combination of key monk and druid abilities, so it's easy to use in a campaign that doesn't include the Palace of the Four Winds (although the Palace is easy enough to keep in the background). If you add a major monk- or druid-flavored ability, take away a level of spellcasting (as with 6th level). If it's a minor ability (such as the Air domain at 10th level), you can retain the improved spellcasting.

Master of the South Wind: If you're looking for an evil equivalent of the master of the south wind, you can add a death attack requirement and change the alignment requirement to lawful evil. You've then created a prestige class that combines the best elements of the monk and the assassin. If you do, have the prestige class simply gain "+1 level of existing class" spellcasting, and make the entry requirements onerous for wizards, clerics, druids, and sorcerers. If you do so, the monk/assassins likely to take the prestige class will simply gain more assassin spells.

Master of the East Wind: The master of the east wind is a prestige class that helps spellcasting monks keep pace with their single-classed brethren without overshadowing them. One hidden balancing factor is the need for high ability scores; there's no overlap between the ability scores most important to the monk (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, and Wisdom) and the master's spellcasting class (Intelligence or Charisma). If you want to make the class more specific, you can insist on either spontaneous arcane magic (limiting the class to sorcerer/monks and the rare bard/monk) or prepared arcane magic (limiting the class to wizard/monks).

Master of the West Wind: Creating an evil version of this class is as simple as changing the alignment requirement to lawful evil and changing the turn undead requirement to a rebuke undead requirement. Such a prestige class would be particularly good for followers of Hextor, Wee Jas, or Nerull. As with all four of these classes, the Climb requirement reflects the location of the Palace of the Four Winds. If you use this class in another way, you can use another skill on the monk class list that doesn't also appear on the cleric list.

GUARDIANS of the DEEPEST SEAS

WATER SPELLS AND FEATS FROM THE Underdark

by James Jacobs ◆ illustrated by Jeff Laubenstein

Not all oceans stretch out under the open sky. Deep below the ground, in the furthest reaches of the Underdark, exist other oceans—vast, lightless tracts of inky water filling caverns of nearly unimaginable size. These regions are known as the darkwaters.

Numerous denizens haunt the shores and islands of the darkwaters; just as on the surface world, civilizations are drawn to these regions. Great drow cities tower on wave-blasted bluffs, svirfneblin towns crowd black beaches, and duergar fortresses crouch on defensible peninsulas. Illithids often build their lairs on isolated isles in the darkwaters, and cloakers often nest in the caverns that pockmark the ceilings above the seas like stars. Even the depths of the waters are rife with life: Aboleth, kuo-toa, and worse are known to dwell in the lightless depths of these subterranean oceans.

Yet not all of the denizens of the darkwaters are sinister and cruel. Recently, a sacred organization of disciples of the gods of nature formed a loosely organized group known as the Darkwater Guardians. The Darkwater Guardians are an elite group of individuals who banded together on the shores of a subterranean sea to devote their lives to defending the integrity of the oceans and waterways beneath the earth.

Founded by Oran Kasmathin, a legendary deep halfling druid, the Darkwater Guardians have grown slowly over the past several decades. Oran's only daughter Jeril took over the leadership duties of the Guardians after her father's untimely death at the hands of an aboleth sorcerer of great power, and under her guidance the organization has become a true force to be reckoned with. The majority of their members dwell in Umberwall. This large fortress stands on the edge of an immense subterranean sea known as the Sea of Sins due to the legend of a dark elven island empire that was swallowed by the sea. Those Darkwater Guardians members that dwell within this fortress observe the sea and patrol its shores and reaches, ever vigilant for attacks by the mindless undead drow cursed to endlessly swim the Sea and the other enemies of the Darkwater Guardians. The greatest of these enemies are the aboleth and kuo-toa, two races that have long used the Sea of Sins as an unassailable front from which to enslave and prey upon other denizens of the Underdark. The Darkwater Guardians envision a day when the aboleth and kuo-toa have been driven from the depths, and the darkwaters are finally clean of their unwholesome taint.

Recently, the success of the Darkwater Guardian enclave has seen their expansion upward, and they have even begun to teach their unique magic and abilities to worthy subjects from the surface world. Surface colonies of

DARKWATER GUARDIANS

The following statistics block represents the members of the order that dwell at Umberwall.

The Darkwater Guardians (Medium): AL N; 7,500 gp resource limit; Membership 52; Mixed (human 18, deep halfling 9, svirfneblin 9, dwarf 7, gnome 4, half-elf 3, drow 2).

Authority Figures: Jeril Kasmathin, female deep halfling Drd5/Sor4/Darkwater Knight 6.

Important Characters: Gadiman Kriak, male svirfneblin Clr9; Irial Nesatha, female drow Sor4/Rgr2; Pike Lorell, male human Drd4/Bbn2; Nora Kilaresk, female half-elf Brd5; Olakanis Meeru, male drow Wiz7; Ulfa Ildabarus, female svirfneblin Rgr5; Ira Kell, male deep halfling Ftr8; Orania Ilmaskus, female deep halfling Mnk4; Tyson Ilmaskus, male deep halfling Rog5/Clr1.

Others: Integrated; Drd6, Drd3 (4), Drd1 (12), Clr4 (2), Clr2 (4), Clr1 (3), Sor3 (2), Sor1 (6), Brd2 (2), Brd1 (3), Wiz3, Wiz1 (2), Rgr2.

Darkwater Guardians can be found on the fringes of society, where they act as guides and protectors of colonists and explorers alike.

DARKWATER KNIGHT

The darkwater knight serves as the greatest and holiest of the protectors of the Darkwater Guardians organization. Few Darkwater Guardians are accepted into this prestigious order. The darkwater knight visits the Darkwater Guardians enclave only rarely, spending most of her time patrolling the outlying regions. She constantly seeks out those who would despoil, pollute, or otherwise take advantage of the darkwaters. There are currently nearly as many darkwater knights serving the guardians as there are members dwelling in the enclave itself, but the knights are spread throughout the Underdark and even, in some cases, onto the surface world. Most darkwater knights prefer to operate alone, using their unique skills to assist others who wish to explore the darkwaters, or even acting as assassins against those who would profane these sacred places.

All darkwater knights are worshipers of the gods of nature. While the Guardians accept non-spellcasters into their enclaves or as bodyguards, only those with the ability to cast spells can qualify for the darkwater knight prestige class. Most darkwater knights are druids, rangers, or clerics with access to the water domain, simply because these classes are the most closely tied to nature. Yet many wizards and sorcerers have been joining the society recently—often initially seeking to add the Guardians' unique magic to their repertoires but staying with the group out of a sense of loyalty and kinship. Bards are perhaps the rarest darkwater knights, but their skills and strong leadership abilities are quite valued.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the darkwater knight prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Darkwater knights are proficient with no additional weapons or armor.

Spells per Day: A darkwater knight continues training in magic as she gains levels. When a new darkwater knight level is gained, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If the character possessed levels in multiple spellcasting classes before becoming a darkwater knight, she must choose which class gains the benefit of each darkwater knight level.

Favored Enemy (Ex): At 1st level, a darkwater knight's extensive knowledge of aquatic creatures grants her bonuses in combat and other interactions with such creatures. She gains a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against creatures with the Aquatic subtype. Likewise, she gets a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against such creatures. At 5th level, the bonus increases to +4, and at 9th level it increases to +6. If the darkwater knight has a favored enemy bonus from another class (such as ranger), her bonuses against Aquatic creatures stack with those from her other class, provided both bonuses apply to the target creature type. Darkwater knights generally bear no ill will toward aquatic creatures, and often ally with like-minded aquatic beings, but they feel no compunction against using their knowledge against their aquatic enemies.

Hit Die D6

DARKWATER KNIGHT REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a darkwater knight, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Patron Deity: Any nature deity.
Knowledge (nature): 6 ranks.
Survival: 6 ranks.
Swim: 6 ranks.
Feats: Skill Focus (Swim), Water Focus*.
Language: Aquan.
Spells: Ability to cast at least three spells (one of which must be at least 2nd level) with the Water descriptor.

*See the Darkwater Feats section.

DARKWATER KNIGHT CLASS SKILLS

The darkwater knight's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Swim.
Dex: Move Silently.
Con: Concentration.
Int: Craft, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (religion), Spellcraft.
Wis: Profession, Survival.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Darkvision (Ex): At 2nd level, a darkwater knight gains darkvision to a range of 60 feet. If she already possesses darkvision, its range increases by +60 feet.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd level and 8th level, the darkwater knight gains a bonus feat. This bonus feat must be a metamagic feat or a feat selected from the new feats presented in the Darkwater Feats section of this article.

Adept Swimmer (Su): At 4th level, the darkwater knight gains a swim speed equal to her land speed. If she already possesses a natural swim speed that is higher than this, it increases by +10 feet. She gains a +8 racial bonus to all Swim checks, and may take 10 on Swim checks even when distracted or threatened. Finally, she can hold her breath for twice as long as normal.

Darkwater Prodigy (Ex): At 6th level, the darkwater knight's devotion and faith enhances her capacity to prepare spells with the water descriptor. As long as she prepares her daily allotment of spells while the majority of her body is immersed in a large body of water, she may prepare a bonus spell of each level that she can cast, providing that the bonus spell has the water descriptor.

Underwater Blindsense (Ex): At 6th level, a darkwater knight can locate creatures in a 30-foot radius underwater. This ability works like blindsense as described in the *Monster Manual* except it only works when the darkwater knight is underwater, and it only detects creatures in the same body of water.

Darkwater Scion (Su): At 10th level, the darkwater knight becomes amphibious and gains the aquatic subtype. She can now breathe water as well as air, and her swim speed increases by an additional +10 feet. While swimming, the darkwater knight gains a +2 morale bonus to initiative checks and all Dexterity-based skill checks. Finally, a darkwater knight casts all spells with the water descriptor at +1 caster level.

DARKWATER FEATS

These feats are often chosen by characters who do not possess natural swim speeds yet spend much of their

time in the water. They are particular favorites of the Darkwater Guardians.

Flotation [General]

You can float on water with ease.

Prerequisite: Skill Focus (Swim), Swim 4 ranks.

Benefit: You can float on the surface of calm water as a free action. You are considered prone and cannot move for the duration of that round, but may otherwise attack, cast spells, or take other actions as if you were lying on solid ground. You can actually sleep while floating on water by using this feat.

Flow With the Current [General]

You use the current around you to enhance your reactions.

Prerequisite: Flotation, Skill Focus (Swim), Swim 4 ranks.

Benefit: By coordinating your actions and movements with the waves, currents, and eddies in the water around you, your ability to react quickly is enhanced. As long as you are swimming, you gain a +2 bonus to Initiative checks and a +2 bonus to Reflex saving throws.

Pressure Resistance [General]

Your body adjusts quickly to changes in water pressure.

Prerequisite: Deep Diver, Endurance, Skill Focus (Swim), Swim 4 ranks.

Benefit: Once you successfully make a Fortitude saving throw to resist damage caused by water pressure, you no longer need to make Fortitude saving throws to avoid damage caused by pressure at that depth. If your depth changes by 100 feet, you must begin making new Fortitude saving throws as normal until you succeed again.

Normal: You must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15 + 1 for each additional saving throw) once every minute to avoid suffering damage from water pressure. (See page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.)

Sea Legs [General]

You are at home on the rolling decks of a ship at sea.

Benefit: As long as you are on a ship floating in the water, you gain a +2 bonus to Balance, Climb, Jump, and Tumble checks.

Water Focus [General]

You are especially gifted at casting spells with the water descriptor.

Benefit: Any spells you cast that have the water descriptor gain a +1 bonus to their save DC. This bonus stacks with the bonus granted by Spell Focus. You also gain a +1 bonus to all saving throws made against spells with the water descriptor.

DARKWATER SPELLS

The Darkwater Guardians developed numerous spells to aid in their defense of the underground seas. Most of these spells remain well-guarded secrets, but a fair number of them have been taught to allies or captured by enemies. The most widespread of these spells are detailed here.

Airbubble

Conjuration (Creation) [Air]
Level: Clr 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Effect: You
Duration: 1 minute/level

This spell creates a small globe of breathable air around your head. This sphere of air forms around your head while you are completely immersed in liquid, providing breathable air for the spell's duration. It does not provide any protection against airborne toxins or poisons, or the effects of magical clouds such as *stinking cloud* or *cloudkill*. If another creature attempts to breathe the air of your *airbubble*, it may do so for 1 round, but on the following round the spell prematurely ends.

Blood to Water

Necromancy [Water]
Level: Clr 7
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Up to three living creatures, no two of which may be more than 20 ft. apart
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

You transmute the target's blood into pure water, inflicting 1d6 points of Constitution damage per two caster levels to the target. If you wish, you can split this damage up among up to three legal targets within range of the spell; you must allocate full dice amounts to each target. For example, a 16th level caster could target three creatures with this spell, inflicting 3d6 points of Constitution damage to two targets and 2d6 points of Constitution damage to the third target. A successful Fortitude save staves off the Constitution damage but leaves the target nauseated for 1d6 rounds.

This spell has no effect on living creatures with the fire or water subtype.

Body Harmonic

Transmutation [Water]
Level: Brd 5
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Long (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You rub the rim of a water-filled glass, causing it to emit a piercing tone. As you do so, the water in the targeted creature's body begins to vibrate loudly and painfully in harmony with the tone. Each round you continue to concentrate on this spell, the victim suffers 1d10 points of damage to one

DARKWATER KNIGHT ADVANCEMENT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Favored enemy (aquatic) +2	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Darkvision 60 ft.	+1 level of existing class
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Adept swimmer	+1 level of existing class
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Favored enemy (aquatic) +4	+1 level of existing class
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	Darkwater prodigy	+1 level of existing class
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Underwater blindsense	+1 level of existing class
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	Favored enemy (aquatic) +6	+1 level of existing class
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	Darkwater scion	+1 level of existing class

ability score. You must select a different ability score each round, and cannot damage any one ability score more than once every 5 rounds. While the target is suffering from *body harmonic,* his body whines and hums discordantly. The victim suffers a -20 penalty to Move Silently checks.

Creatures with the Fire subtype are immune to the effects of this spell.

Focus: A crystal water-filled goblet worth at least 500 gp.

Deep Breath

Conjuration (Creation) [Air]
Level: Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 free action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level

Your lungs instantly fill with air, and continue to refill with air for the duration of the spell. When the spell's duration expires, you may continue to hold your breath as if you just gulped down a lungful of air.

You can cast this spell with an instant utterance, quickly enough to save yourself from drowning after being suddenly plunged into water. Casting the spell is a free action, like casting a quickened spell, and it counts toward the normal limit of one quickened spell per round. You may even cast this spell when it isn't your turn.

Extract Water Elemental

Transmutation [Water]
Level: Drd 6, Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Short (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude half
Spell Resistance: Yes

This brutal spell causes the targeted creature to dehydrate horribly as the moisture in its body is forcibly extracted through its eyes, nostrils, mouth, and pores. This causes 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 20d6), or half damage on a successful Fortitude save. If the targeted creature is slain by this spell, the extracted moisture is transformed into a water elemental of a size equal to the slain creature. If the slain creature is Gargantuan, the spell creates two Huge water elementals. If the slain creature is Colossal, the spell creates three Huge water elementals. The water elementals created by this spell are free-willed and under no compulsion to obey the caster.

This spell has no effect on living creatures with the fire or water subtype.

Nixie's Grace

Transmutation [Water]
Level: Brd 6
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Effect: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This potent spell infuses you with powerful fey magic, granting you many of the traits and abilities of a nixie. Upon completing the casting of this spell, you gain a swim speed of 30 feet. You can breathe underwater, and you gain low-light vision and damage reduction 5/cold iron. You also gain a +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity and Wisdom and a +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma.

Focus: A lock of nixie's hair, freely given to you by the nixie.

Raise From the Deep

Transmutation [Water]
Level: Clr 9, Sor/Wiz 9
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Long (400 ft. +40 ft./level); see text
Target: One creature or object; see text
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (object)
Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

The target of this spell gains magical buoyancy and floats on the surface of the water for the duration of the spell, despite its weight or normal buoyancy. It cannot swim below the surface of the water. Creatures that must breathe water can still do so. If the target is underwater at the time this spell is cast, it rises toward the surface at a speed of 150 feet. The magic of the spell prevents the target from suffering pressure damage from the speed of the ascent.

This spell is particularly effective at raising sunken ships from the deep. If you know the exact details of the shipwreck (it's appearance, it's name, the date of its creation, its history, and the circumstances of its sinking), the vertical distance between you and the target is not a factor. When cast to raise a shipwreck, the spell brings up all surviving fragments of the ship, along with any loose objects that are in contact with the ship or enclosed inside of it. The ship and its fragments remain on the surface of the ocean until the spell's duration ends, at which point the ship sinks again if it has not been repaired.

Rogue Wave

Conjuration (Creation) [Water]
Level: Clr 4, Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: 10-ft.-long, 20-ft.-wide, 10-ft.-high wave of water
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial (object)
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a large wave of water and sends it surging forth to smash all in its path. The wave starts at any point you select within range of the spell and then moves 60 feet in any direction chosen by you. The wave deals 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage for every two caster levels (maximum 10d6) to all in its path. Anything struck may make a Fortitude saving throw to suffer half damage. A creature of Large or smaller size that fails this Fortitude save is knocked prone by the rogue wave.

The wave's progress can be halted by anything that would normally block line of effect along the path of the wave, assuming the wave does not destroy the intervening object or creature. If only a portion of the wave is blocked, the rest of the wave continues on.

Although this spell can be cast on dry land, it is more effective in water. When cast on a body of water large enough to contain the wave for the duration of its travel, creatures struck by the wave suffer a -4 penalty to their saves to resist its effects, the width of the wave increases to 40 feet, and the distance it travels increases to 120 feet as long as it is in contact with the surface of a body of water. A *rogue wave* that begins on water but travels onto land immediately shrinks to its land size and speed. If it

has already traveled more than 60 feet when it hits dry land, the wave vanishes upon reaching shore. The wave also vanishes if it moves beyond the spell's range.

Submerge Ship

Evocation [Water]
Level: Sor/Wiz 7
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: Ship touched
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You grant the ship touched a swim speed of 60 feet. The ship's speed and direction can be controlled by you as a free action. The ship itself is protected from water or pressure damage, and all interior spaces of the ship remain dry even if a doorway or porthole is open while the ship is underwater. Any creature onboard the ship when the spell is cast can move about the ship with ease as if it were afloat on a calm sea; this includes climbing and jumping. These creatures can breathe water for the duration of the spell and do not suffer damage from water pressure as long as they remain within 10 feet of the ship. External forces, such as a storm or an angry dragon, can still jostle the ship and cause it to shake and possibly knock passengers and objects from it, but nothing falls from the ship as a result of your direction of its movement.

You can transfer control of the ship to another individual by giving that individual the miniature rudder you used as a focus to cast the spell. If the focus is ever lost or becomes unattended, the spell's duration ends.

Once the spell ends (either because the duration ran out, the focus was lost or became unattended, or the magic was successfully dispelled), the magic lingers for 1 additional round per caster level. During this time, the ship ascends towards the water's surface at a rate of 60 feet per round. If the ship is still underwater when these rounds end, it immediately sinks and its passengers and crew risk drowning.

Focus: A miniature wooden rudder inlaid with silver, worth 2,500 gp.

Tsunami

Conjuration (Creation) [Water]
Level: Drd 9
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Effect: 20-ft./level-wide, 10-ft.-long, 40-ft.-high wave of water
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial (object)
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a towering *tsunami* and sends it forth in a powerful wave to smash all in its path. The *tsunami* starts at any point you select within range of the spell and then moves at a speed of 60 feet in any direction chosen by you. Once the direction is set, the *tsunami* cannot change course. The *tsunami* deals 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage per caster level (maximum 20d6) to all in its path. Anything struck may make a Fortitude saving throw to halve the damage. Gargantuan or larger creatures that fail to save are knocked prone. Huge or smaller creatures that fail the save are picked up and carried by the *tsunami*. Each round a victim is carried by the *tsunami*, it suffers the bludgeoning damage again and can make an additional Fortitude save to halve the damage. Creatures carried by the *tsunami* cannot move other than to be carried by the *tsunami*. They can otherwise act normally, but must make a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level) to cast a spell. Creatures caught in the tsunami take a -4 penalty to Dexterity and a -2 penalty on attack rolls. A creature caught in a *tsunami* can escape the wave by making a successful DC 20 Swim check, as long as they end their movement outside of the tsunami's area of effect.

Any creature that comes in contact with the *tsunami* as a result of movement during its turn is considered to have been struck by the *tsunami's* movement. A creature can attempt to extract another creature caught by the *tsunami*, providing the rescuer resists being swept up or knocked down by the *tsunami* and can reach the victim. Extracting a victim in this manner requires a successful DC 20 Strength check.

The *tsunami*'s progress can be halted by anything that would normally block line of effect along the path of the *tsunami*, assuming the tsunami does not destroy the intervening object or creature. If only a portion of the tsunami is blocked, the rest of the *tsunami* continues on.

Although this spell can be cast on dry land, it is most effective when cast on the open sea. In this case, saving throws to avoid full damage are made at a -4 penalty, and the width of the *tsunami* increases to 40 feet per caster level. A *tsunami* that begins on water but then travels onto land immediately shrinks to its land size and speed. The *tsunami* does not vanish if it moves beyond the spell's initial range.

Focus: A crown of coral set with pearls (total value of at least 5,000 gp).

Wall of Water

Conjuration (Creation) [Water]
Level: Drd 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: Transparent wall of water, up to one 10-ft. cube/level (S)
Duration: 10 min./level
Saving Throw: Reflex negates; see text
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a thick wall of fresh water or seawater (as selected by the caster). The water forms around objects and creatures in its area, plunging these creatures and objects underwater. A creature in the area where the water is created can make a Reflex save to move to a random side of the wall before it forms completely. This movement must occur on the creature's next turn or it immediately suffers the full effects of being in the wall. Creatures can move through the wall of water by making Swim checks; the water itself is considered to be calm water. Any open flames in the area when the water forms are immediately extinguished. Creatures with the fire subtype take 2d6 points of damage +1 point per caster level each round they remain partially or wholly in the wall.

Although the wall is transparent, it provides cover to any targets inside against attacks launched from outside the wall. It cannot be destroyed by physical damage, nor can it be drained to a different location. Water brought out of the wall in a container instantly evaporates as the wall itself forms more water to replace what was removed.

Material Component: A sponge. D

SEARING FLAMES

THE ECOLOGY OF THE SALAMANDER

by Christopher Campbell · illustrated by Anne Stokes

Sinuous and sinister, wreathed in flames like the classic image of a soul burning in Hell, the salamander is truly the stuff of nightmares. Combining two common representations of evil—snakes and fire—salamanders do their best to live up to their opponents' preconceived notions. These cruel, rapacious predators destroy all they encounter, leaving nothing but devastation in their wake. Even when such destruction is not their goal, it is nevertheless inevitable, for little can withstand prolonged exposure to a salamander's consuming flames.

Native to a harsh environment where only the strong can survive, salamanders devote much of their time to games of warfare and social dominance. Largely because they themselves are prey for more powerful beings, such as the efreet, salamanders take great delight in venting their frustrations on weaker races.

PHYSIOLOGY

A salamander's form combines the well-muscled torso of a humanoid with the lower body of a constrictor snake. Individuals might range in length from a mere 4 feet (for a flamebrother) to a whopping 32 feet (for the oldest noble salamander). Although salamanders are asexual, their thin faces have a distinctly masculine appearance. A typical salamander's craggy features include a hooked nose and jutting chin.

A salamander's entire body is covered in thick scales of red and black that provide excellent protection from physical attacks. Spines of chitinous material poke out from between a salamander's scales. The oily liquid that oozes from the tips of these barbs is a natural waste product of the salamander's metabolism. When exposed to the intense heat generated by the creature's body, this substance bursts into flames, creating a fiery aura that radiates no more than 1 inch from the salamander. The temperature of this aura is so great that direct contact with it deals fire damage, boils away liquids, and incinerates paper.

Because of their similar appearances and close association, many believe that flamebrothers are juvenile salamanders, but in fact they are a separate species. Knowledgeable sages compare this relationship to that of goblins and hobgoblins. Although just as intelligent, flamebrothers tend to savagery and tribalism when left to their own devices. Salamanders act as a civilizing element to flamebrother society, and as with hobgoblin control of goblin tribes, salamander domination offers an often welcome stability.

LIFE CYCLE

A salamander reproduces asexually by budding, splitting off one larva every ten years. Budding is an automatic function over which the salamander has no control. The process takes 1 week, after which the salamander is particularly vulnerable to attack until its body has recovered.

The first sign of budding is a swelling at the tip of the salamander's tail. The lump grows and spreads upward through the tail, increasing in size each day. Salamanders are extremely irritable and more vicious than normal during this time. From the second to the fifth day, the lump slows the salamander's movement by one-half and prevents it from constricting. By the sixth day, the salamander's entire body is swollen, and the creature is practically immobile. It cannot attack, it loses its Dexterity bonus (if any) to AC, and its speed is reduced to 5 feet. On the seventh day, the salamander's skin splits open, releasing the original adult salamander (with a new skin) plus one larva.

For one week following budding, the parent salamander's natural AC bonus is reduced to +3 while its new scales harden. It generally tries to avoid making constriction attacks during this time, since sustained pressure is extremely painful on the newly formed skin. Once

its scales have reached their full hardness, the salamander is ready to resume its former activities.

A larva must incubate within a fire source for one full year to evolve into a mature salamander. Although dangerous in its own right, it cannot survive for long outside a fire. If prevented from returning to its nurturing flames for more than 1 minute, a larva cools rapidly and dies as its body hardens into a substance resembling charred wood. Because of this vulnerability, larvae incubation chambers (called blazes) are heavily guarded and defended unto death.

A SALAMANDER HAS NO DRIVE TO OBTAIN SUSTENANCE...

The maturation process works much the same as budding. At the end of its year in the flames, the larva swells, tripling in size over the course of one week. It loses its Dexterity bonus (if any) to AC during this time, and it can't move. At the end of the week, the larva's skin splits, releasing an adult salamander. Newly formed salamanders have the same vulnerabilities and restrictions as those that have just budded, and those limitations last for the same period of time.

Noble Salamanders

Noble salamanders do not reproduce. If an average salamander is lucky enough to survive for fifty years, it goes through yet another metamorphosis. Just like a maturing larva, it swells up, becoming completely immobile and helpless. At the end of one week, its skin splits, and a noble salamander emerges from the husk.

Not only is a noble salamander much larger than an average one, it also has a set of antlerlike projections on its forehead. These antlers are not for combat, as many sages believe. Rather, they somehow focus or channel the arcane energy that noble salamanders require for their spell-like abilities. Properly prepared, a noble salamander's antler can serve as the basis for a wand for any spell of the noble salamanders spell-like abilities, cutting the item's usual cost of materials by 25%. (See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for complete details on magic item creation.)

Young Salamanders

Juvenile salamanders come in two forms—the flamebrother larva and the average salamander larva. Each kind of larva must spend one year in the flames to mature. At that point, it splits to release the corresponding adult salamander.

Flamebrother Larva

Tiny Outsider (Extraplanar, Fire)
Hit Dice: 1d8 (4 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 10 ft.
AC: 17 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 15
Base Attack/Grapple: +1/-8
Attack: Bite +2 melee (1d3-1 plus 1d3 fire)
Full Attack: Bite +2 melee (1d3-1 plus 1d3 fire)
Space/Reach: 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Heat
Special Qualities: Camouflage, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire, vulnerability to cold
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +3
Abilities: Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 12
Skills: Craft (blacksmithing) +5*, Hide +14*, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Spot +7
Feats: Alertness
Climate/Terrain: Elemental Plane of Fire
Organization: Solitary, pair, or cluster (3-5)
Challenge Rating: 1/2
Treasure: None
Alignment: Usually evil (any)
Advancement: 2-3 HD (Tiny)

The creature resembles a fat snake or worm with a pink hide and a mouth filled with needle-like teeth.

A flamebrother larva measures about 1 foot long. Because they require a constant fire source to mature, these larvae are encountered only on their native plane or in areas of sustained high heat, such as volcanoes. The occasional sorcerer or wizard might keep one or two as pets in a carefully tended fireplace, but this practice is exceedingly rare.

If ever forcibly removed from its fire, a flamebrother larva immediately attempts to return to it. Fire deprivation for longer than 1 minute results in death as the flamebrother larva's body stiffens and hardens into a woodlike substance.

Flamebrother larvae understand Ignan, but they cannot speak.

Combat

Flamebrother larvae use their environment to their advantage, blending into the dancing flames and striking to catch opponents by surprise.

Heat (Ex): A flamebrother larva generates so much heat that its mere touch deals 1d3 points of additional fire damage.

Camouflage (Ex): The outline of a flamebrother larva in a fiery or extremely hot area (flames, lava, burning embers, or the like) appears to shift and waver. This distortion grants it concealment (20% miss chance).

***Skills:** A flamebrother larva receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks made within a fire source. Although incapable of using the skill, flamebrother larvae still possess the salamander's +4 racial bonus to Craft (blacksmithing).

Average Salamandar Larva

Small Outsider (Extraplanar, Fire)
Hit Dice: 3d8+3 (16 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: 10 ft.
AC: 17 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 16
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+0
Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d4+1 plus 1d3 fire)
Full Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d4+1 plus 1d3 fire)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Heat
Special Qualities: Camouflage, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire, vulnerability to cold
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 12

Skills: Bluff +7, Craft (blacksmithing) +2*, Hide +11*, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Search +4, Spot +9
Feats: Alertness, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Elemental Plane of Fire
Organization: Solitary, pair, or cluster (3-5)
Challenge Rating: 1
Treasure: None
Alignment: Usually evil (any)
Advancement: 4-8 HD (Small)

The creature resembles a fat maggot with a fang-filled maw.

An average salamander larva ranges from 2 to 3 feet long. Like the flamebrother larva, it requires a constant fire source to mature, so these creatures are encountered only on the Elemental Plane of Fire or in areas of sustained high heat, such as volcanoes.

If ever forcibly removed from its fire, an average salamander larva immediately attempts to return to it. Fire deprivation for longer than 1 minute results in death as the larva's body stiffens and hardens into a woodlike substance.

Average salamander larvae understand Ignan, but they cannot speak.

Combat

Like flamebrother larvae, average salamander larvae can blend into the dancing flames in which they live for defense.

Heat (Ex): A average salamander larva generates so much heat that its mere touch deals 1d3 points of additional fire damage.

Camouflage (Ex): The outline of a average salamander larva in a fiery or extremely hot area (flames, lava, burning embers, or the like) appears to shift and waver. This distortion grants it concealment (20% miss chance).

***Skills:** A average salamander larva receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks made within a fire source. Although incapable of using the skill, average salamander larvae still possess the salamander's +4 racial bonus to Craft (blacksmithing).

MINDSET

As a native of the Elemental Plane of Fire, a salamander does not think like a creature of the Material Plane. It has no drive to propagate because budding is an automatic process. It has no drive to obtain sustenance, since smoke and flames provide all the nutrients it requires. It has no need to secure shelter because its environment poses no danger to it. What then motivates a salamander? In a word: fire.

Born of fire, nurtured by it, and surrounded by it constantly, salamanders live by its rules and embrace its strengths. Fire burns. Fire consumes. Fire destroys. Fire represents the ultimate in strength and power, and salamanders judge all things by their interactions with it. Earth and stone smoke and crack beneath a salamander's fiery form but withstand destruction, and so they earn its respect. Metal bends to the will of fire but resists complete annihilation, and so the salamander employs it as a tool. Gems capture and reflect the light of fire, splitting it into a dazzling display of color and brilliance, and so the salamander prizes gems. All else is of little consequence. At the touch of fire, liquids boil away, paper turns to ash, and the creatures of the Material Plane cower. Thus, all of these earn only contempt from a salamander.

SOCIETY

Salamanders are most often encountered in clusters—small groups of three to five individuals, all of the same kind. On the Elemental Plane of Fire, clusters belong to a tribe, which in turn might owe allegiance to either a king or a council. Away from their home plane, salamander groupings rarely expand beyond the cluster, since the local environment usually cannot support a larger population.

A salamander tribe consists of six to eight clusters that share a communal larvae blaze and metalworking facility. A lone average salamander might take charge of a tribe of flamebrothers, but such tribes might also exist without leaders. Noble salamanders almost always rule over average salamander communities, either singly or as a group. Such oligarchies often owe allegiance to even more powerful creatures of fire, such as red dragons or efreet.

The worship of fire as both a creative and a destructive force is not a concept unique to salamanders, but as creatures born and refined to maturity in flames, they claim part of fire's divinity for themselves. As divine creatures in their own right, they feel it only natural that they have dominion over lesser beings. This attitude leads to the practice of slavery as a means of reinforcing the dominance of salamanders over inferior races.

LAIRS

The Elemental Plane of Fire is an endless expanse of flame. Huge sheets of black basalt float in oceans of magma, and all of it has been ablaze since the creation of the multiverse. This environment is the natural habitat of salamanders and the one with which they are most familiar.

The curse of being an outsider, however, is that lesser creatures from other planes can call on you to do their bidding, if even only for a short period of time. Summoning spells expose salamanders to a wide variety of terrains and settings, and they are capable of surviving in any kind of natural environment except underwater. Sometimes, however, the summoning magic goes awry, and a salamander is unable to return home. In such a case, the creature sets about making its surroundings feel more comfortable. Such adjustments are always made at the expense of the environment, but salamanders have no regard for anything that cannot withstand the ravages of fire.

...SINCE SMOKE AND FLAMES PROVIDE ALL THE NUTRIENTS IT REQUIRES.

Given a choice, salamanders gravitate toward the hottest, driest locales they can find to establish their bases of operation. A subterranean lair makes an ideal refuge, second only to an active

FAMILIARS FOR SALAMANDERS

As an optional rule, you can give the standard familiars in the *Player's Handbook* the fire subtype to make them viable as familiars for salamander sorcerers and wizards. The ability to have a familiar is an integral part of those classes, and it's unfair to restrict a salamander's choices to creatures that could not survive in its normal habitat. These fire-based familiars might also have cosmetic changes—such as orange and red coloring, an aura of flickering flames that causes no damage, or an altogether alien appearance—that differentiate them from their Material Plane counterparts.

volcano. The dryness of the desert appeals to salamanders, but the distinct lack of fuel in such a terrain poses a major drawback, since a long-term blaze is vital for raising young. Hilly areas make good salamander lairs, providing easy access to underground areas but still offering a good amount of fuel. The mining that sometimes happens in such terrain also attracts salamanders, and a cluster might try to take over a mineshaft to gain access to metal ore. The opportunity to work metal helps keep a salamander's mind off the alien environment in which it is trapped, and fortunate is the miner who can convince one to aid in smelting his ore.

SALAMANDERS' METAL WEAPONS CONDUCT THEIR HEAT FOR ADDITIONAL DAMAGE.

Mining operations also make mountains attractive sites for lairs. Stranded salamander clusters sometimes offer their metalworking expertise to dwarven clans in exchange for sanctuary and a semblance of normal life. Many dwarven clans regularly summon creatures such as salamanders or fire and earth elementals to help run their mining operations, and such spellcasting ability might also provide a means to return stranded salamanders to the Elemental Plane of Fire.

Perhaps the most homelike place that a stranded cluster of salamanders can find on the Material Plane is the smoking caldera of an active volcano. An added bonus is the prevalence of *portals* that usually link the Material Plane with the Elemental Plane of Fire in such environments. Experienced salamanders, especially nobles, know that the best chance of getting home is locating such a *portal* within a bubbling lava pool or a fiery jet of ignited gas.

KILLER CREATURE COMBOS

Salamanders are often found in the company of more powerful fire creatures. Many also command their own slaves.

A Red Dragon Wyrmling and Flamebrothers: Flamebrothers stranded on the Material Plane sometimes offer to watch over a red dragon's eggs or hatchlings in exchange for protection. A red dragon wyrmling raised with such creatures as its nannies and playmates not only develops a close attachment to them but also learns to exercise effective group tactics in conjunction with them. While the wyrmling uses its breath weapon, the flamebrothers attempt to flank or overbear opponents. A red dragon wyrmling and three flamebrothers constitute an EL 6 encounter.

A Salamander and Azers: Kept as slaves by many salamander communities, azers act as beasts of burden and blacksmithing assistants. Both salamanders and azers are kept as servants by the efreet. Whatever their association, these two kinds of creatures can cooperate to make flanking attacks, and both can take full advantage of their heat special attack by employing metal weapons and making grappling attacks. One average salamander and two azers are an EL 7 encounter.

Salamanders and a Fire Elemental: Kept as pets by the various denizens of their native plane, fire elementals make ideal guards for salamanders because they are often difficult to see when at rest in the fire sources in which they lair. Two average salamanders and a Large fire elemental constitute an EL 8 encounter.

A Noble Salamander and Rasts: Noble salamanders often travel the planes in search of hidden knowledge, and often such a pilgrim keeps rasts as watchdogs. These vicious creatures readily engage opponents in melee, allowing the salamander to hang back and use its fire-based spell-like abilities without fear of harming its pets. One noble salamander and a pair of rasts make an EL 10 encounter.

A Noble Salamander Sorcerer and A Young Adult Red Dragon: This pair makes a near-perfect match. The dragon looks to the salamander for guidance in the development of its sorcerous powers, and the noble takes advantage of the dragon's superior combat expertise and ability to act as a mount. Since these two creatures work together by mutual agreement, they split treasure, with the dragon claiming items that are too fragile to withstand the salamander's heat. A 5th-level noble salamander sorcerer and a young adult red dragon constitute an EL 15 encounter.

SALAMANDERS VS. PCS

The superiority of fire can be effectively demonstrated through combat, and salamanders enjoy destroying creatures that are clearly inferior. They usually target the strongest-looking opponents first, thereby prolonging the inevitable for the weaker opponents. As fire leaps from building to building, so too does a salamander pursue its enemies. The sections below demonstrate good uses of a salamander's abilities and are intended to help a DM run a salamander NPC.

A Warm Welcome: The touch of a salamander deals fire damage—1d6 points in the case of a flamebrother or average salamander and 1d8 points in the case of a noble. Salamanders capitalize on this characteristic by employ-

ing metal weapons that conduct their heat for additional damage. A dropped weapon no longer conveys the salamander's heat, but in an environment such as the Elemental Plane of Fire, a dropped weapon never cools.

Salamanders know what materials can and cannot withstand their intense heat. A favored tactic is to wrest a weapon or other object from an opponent's grasp with a disarm attack (using a wielded weapon or its tail), then either toss it into the nearest flames or keep hold of it. Items in the salamander's possession take fire damage each round. There is no saving throw, but object hardness affects the fire damage normally.

Abracadabra: A noble salamander has access to a number of spell-like abilities that it can use to its advantage. *Dispel magic* takes care of those pesky spells that adventurers like to use to protect themselves from fire. Thereafter, the noble salamander can use a *wall of fire* to divide and conquer. The creature can use *wall of fire* three times per day, and multiple barriers of this sort can eat up spells such as *resist energy* and *protection from energy* very quickly.

Flaming sphere is a good choice for setting opponents aflame, but only if the salamander can devote some time to directing it. Summoning a Huge fire elemental to keep opponents busy can provide such time, and it also ensures that the salamander has an ally for flanking purposes if melee combat becomes necessary.

Since a noble salamander has no fear of fire damage, dropping a *fireball* on itself is a smart way to take out multiple opponents in melee. Like *wall of fire*, this ability is usable three times per day. *Burning hands* is the least useful of the noble's abilities, since the spell's range doesn't exceed its reach with its tail or weapon. Thus, it is best kept as a last-ditch defense.

PCs VS. SALAMANDERS

With sufficient preparation, a party can survive and even triumph over an equivalent force of salamanders.

Turn Down the Heat: *Resist energy* and *protection from energy* are the most logical choices for self-preservation in combat with a salamander. Layer them on; they might not stack, but any melee combat is going to involve a lot of heat. Also, if a character is unlucky enough to be targeted by a noble salamander's *dispel magic* effect, chances are that at least one spell will survive.

A Cool Reception: Fight fire with cold. Salamanders have the fire subtype, which means they're particularly vulnerable to cold damage. *Cone of cold, Otiluke's freezing sphere,* and *ice storm* are all good offensive spells, and *ray of frost* is a good cantrip choice for low-level adventurers fighting flamebrothers, since it allows no saving throw if it hits.

Energy Substitution (a feat from *Tome and Blood*) allows spellcasters to change one energy type into another specified by the feat without using up a higher-level spell slot. Make *fireballs* cause cold damage, and watch the salamanders scatter!

From a Distance: The best way to avoid a salamander's constriction attack is to stay back. Of course, average and noble salamanders have damage reduction, so be sure to load up on magic ammunition and ranged spells. If you must close the gap for combat, use the Tumble skill to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity and try to maneuver for flanking bonuses. Also, you can try to get rid of a noble salamander's magic longspear by making disarm and sunder attacks.

Alacazam: If you're facing salamanders on the Material Plane, a cleric, sorcerer, or wizard can be your greatest asset. Forget trying to kill the fiery outsiders—just send them back to their home plane. Spells such as *banishment, dismissal,* and *holy word* exist for just such a purpose. *Dictum* or *word of chaos* can also achieve the same effect, but since salamanders can vary in alignment along the law-chaos axis, those spells carry an inherent risk of failure. In any case, salamanders don't have spell resistance, so the odds are on your side.

NPC SALAMANDERS

Salamanders can advance as outsiders, making the NPC classes poor choices. With all good saves, d8 Hit Dice, fighter base attack advancement, and 8 skill points per Hit Die, advancing as an outsider is a good choice even when compared to PC classes. A salamander that advances in a PC class should do so to take advantage of the class's special abilities. Below are some additional suggestions for making unique and interesting classed salamanders.

Barbarian: Barbarian salamanders embrace the destructive force of fire, channeling its all-consuming power into a rage that can terrify even their own kind. Such a character is a formidable force indeed, since the Strength boost provided by rage increases the damage for all its attacks and raises its grapple bonus for constriction.

Bard: Delicate instruments such as lutes, lyres, and wooden flutes cannot withstand contact with a salamander, and while the blaring of bugles or horns might provide a pleasing accompaniment to the crackling of flames, brass cymbals or iron bells would probably make better instrument choices for a salamander bard.

Cleric: It should not be surprising that salamanders feel a strong connection with divinity, given that they are creatures of fire and therefore divine in their own eyes. Salamander clerics

SALAMANDER FEATS

These feats are recommended for constructing unique salamanders. At the DM's option, the prerequisites may be adjusted to make these feats available to other races as well.

BURNING RAGE [General]
Your rage stokes the flames of your body's heat.

Prerequisites: Con 13, heat special attack, rage.

Benefit: While raging, the fire damage of your heat special attack increases by +1d6.

GOUT OF FLAME [General]
You gain a breath weapon usable once per day.

Prerequisites: Con 13, heat special attack.

Benefit: Once per day, you can regurgitate a mouthful of flaming bile and spit it at an opponent. Your breath weapon is a 15-foot line of fire that deals 2d6 points of fire damage (Reflex half). The saving throw DC is 10 + 1/2 your HD + your Constitution modifier.

TAIL SNAP [General]
You can use your tail to hurl a globule of fire as a missile weapon.

Prerequisites: Con 13, heat special attack, snakelike tail.

Benefit: As an attack action, you can snap your tail like a whip, hurling a flaming globe at a target up to 100 feet away. This ranged touch attack has no range increment, and the globe deals fire damage equal to that of your heat special attack. Physically tiring to perform, this attack can be used a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Constitution modifier.

can choose among the domains of Destruction, Evil, and Fire.

Fighter: Fighter is the preferred class for salamanders. Combat is the most direct way to demonstrate superiority over other beings, and in larger tribes, entire clusters might be trained as fighters. Levels of fighter can also allow a DM to give a salamander additional feats without sacrificing its current abilities.

Monk: A salamander monk makes a truly deadly opponent, especially since it has the Multiattack feat. Not only do monk levels boost the salamander's already impressive AC, but the additional unarmed attacks it gains are even more devastating with the added damage from its heat ability.

Ranger: Ranger is a perfectly reasonable class for a salamander, especially from the standpoint of favored enemies. Many salamander rangers would select outsider (fire) in order to combat azers and efreet, their most ardent competitors on the Elemental Plane of Fire. Still others might choose humanoid (human) to exterminate the arrogant creatures that trespass on their plane and drag them across reality with summoning spells.

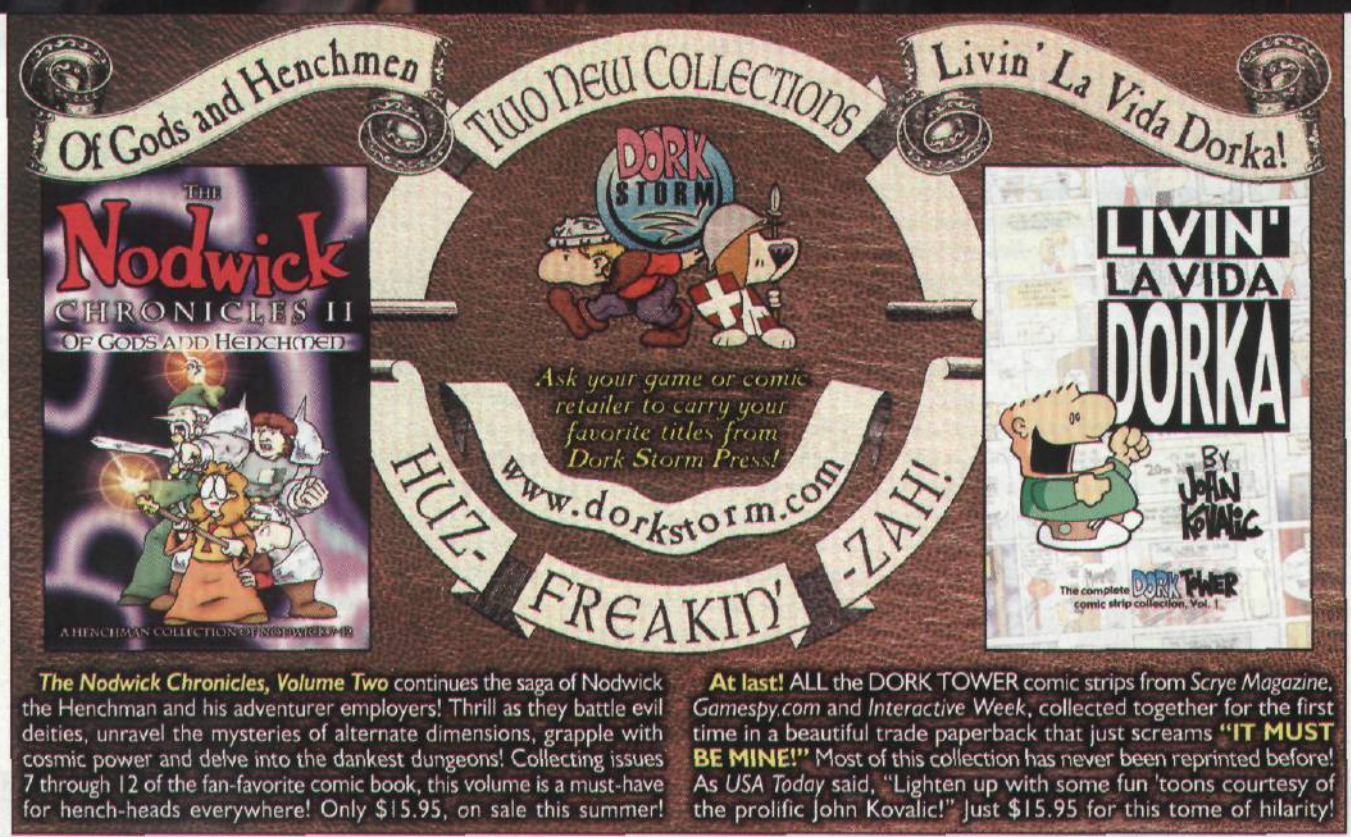
Since bows and arrows cannot withstand their heat, most salamander rangers select the two-weapon combat style.

Rogue: The need for weapons that are effective against their predatory neighbors and the desire to keep such weapons out of the hands of others naturally lead to the development of salamander rogues. If the owner of a *frostbrand* sword won't trade for it and is too tough to kill, the only choice left is to steal the weapon. The rogue's evasion class ability is a great boon to salamanders because of their susceptibility to cold-based attacks. Sneak attacks can make salamander teams much more deadly, giving them the ability to deal regular damage, heat damage, and sneak attack damage all at once when flanking opponents.

Sorcerer: Sorcery is the most common form of arcane spellcasting among salamanders. The inborn talent for summoning and manipulating magical energy is considered a gift. An average salamander nearing its metamorphosis into a noble sometimes explores the magical side of its nature by taking several levels of sorcerer before gaining its spell-like abilities.

Wizard: Wizards are virtually unknown among salamanders because of the spellbook requirement. A rare few craft spellbooks out of thin sheets of brass embossed with the arcane symbols necessary for dweomercraft, but such a book costs three times the normal amount to create. Add to that the difficulty of obtaining new spells (because conventional spellbooks and scrolls are combustible), and the number of salamander wizards dwindles to a negligible level.

FORGET TRYING TO KILL THE FIERY OUTSIDERS. JUST SEND THEM BACK TO THEIR HOME PLANE.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CHANNELING THE ELEMENTS

4 Elemental Prestige Classes

An icy glance, a windy promise, a fiery temper, a heart of stone—the four elements symbolize, personify, and evoke innumerable emotions and ideas. The idea that earth, air, fire, and water somehow combine to form the world as we know it has intrigued humankind throughout history. The very simplicity and mystery of this concept makes the four elements potent ingredients for the mythos of a fantasy world. The elements can provide a source of power for spellcasters or be worshiped by the devout. Elemental power can run through the veins of the world's heroes and villains and shape the face of its landscape. From the lost warrior seeking to light the fire within to the goddess of ice attempting to drive all warmth from the multiverse, there are many ways in which the four elements can lend a new sense of depth and mysticism to your game.

The elements can provide a springboard for both DMs and players to develop unique and memorable characters. The first decision in creating such a character is exactly how he is tied to the element in question. Is the character actually descended from a creature native to one of the elemental planes—a genasi perhaps? Or does he simply have a strong interest in one of the elements? The answer to this question determines the extent of any special racial powers the character might have that are related to the element.

Tying a character to an element can also add considerable roleplaying interest. Certain traits and emotions are associated with each of the four elements, and incorporating some of those traits into the character's personality helps emphasize the relationship. A character linked to fire might demonstrate anger, cunning, swiftness, or capriciousness. Water is often associated with compassion, persistence, a cold heart, or a changeable personality. Characters connected to earth might be steadfast, resilient, stubborn, or callous. The traits associated with air include serenity, vocal talent, purity, and a wild temper.

Prestige classes can also provide effective ways to quantify a character's tie to a specific element. A small twist in the flavor or mechanics of a published prestige class can create a new option for players of element-based characters to explore. The arcane archer, for example, could gain her abilities from a pact with the wind rather than raw arcane power. A simple alteration to the description of the dwarven defender can give the class an earthy flavor, allowing its members to gain their resilience and fortitude from their dedication to earth and stone.

Prestige classes specifically designed for characters with elemental affinities can also provide a path for the development of that relationship. Presented here are four new prestige classes, each of which ties together the physical form and emotional significance of one element.

EARTHSHAKER

Earthshakers are spellcasters who have chosen to tap the power of the earth itself. Earthshakers command the great geological forces that shape the world: earthquakes, volcanoes, geysers, and more.

Nothing is more intrinsic to nature than the forces that bind it, so it is not surprising that most earthshakers are druids. A few clerics of nature deities also become earthshakers because they believe that tectonic forces are direct manifestations of their gods. NPC earthshakers often use their powers to fight foes of the earth.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the earthshaker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Earthshakers gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: At 1st level and every earthshaker level thereafter, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in whatever spellcasting class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus metamagic or item creation feats, improved turning ability, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of earthshaker to the level of whatever spellcasting class he has, then determines spells per day, spells known, and caster level accordingly.

If the character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming an earthshaker, he must decide to which class he adds each level of earthshaker for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Earth Domain: At 1st level, the earthshaker is granted access to the Earth domain. In the likely event that he has druid levels rather than cleric levels, the earthshaker can cast an extra spell per day of each spell level he has access to, which must be the spell from the Earth domain for that level. He gains the Earth domain's granted power, substituting his earthshaker levels for cleric levels.

HIT DIE: D8

EARTHSHAKER REQUIREMENTS

To qualify as an earthshaker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Knowledge (dungeoneering): 6 ranks.

Knowledge (nature): 12 ranks.

Spells: Ability to cast *soften earth and stone.*

Language: Terran.

EARTHSHAKER CLASS SKILLS

The earthshaker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb.

Dex: Balance.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Craft (any), Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (nature), Spellcraft.

Wis: Survival.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Tremorsense (Ex): At 1st level, the earthshaker becomes sensitive to vibrations in the earth's surface. He automatically senses the location of anything that is in contact with the ground and within 5 feet of him. This ability functions exactly as described in the Tremorsense entry on page 299 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide.* The range increases by 5 feet at every other earthshaker level (to 10 feet at 3rd level, 15 feet at 5th level, 20 feet at 7th level, and 25 feet at 9th level).

Tremor (Su): As a standard action, a 2nd-level earthshaker can create a small, localized tremor in the earth that lasts for 1d4 rounds. Every creature touching the ground in a 10-foot radius around the earthshaker must make a successful Balance check (DC 10 + earthshaker level) or fall prone. A new save at the same DC is required for each subsequent round until the creature moves out of the affected area or the effect ends. All creatures in the affected area are considered to be engaged in vigorous motion for the purpose of Concentration checks (see the Concentration skill description in Chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook*). The area of the tremor does not move with the earthshaker, and he is immune to all its effects.

This ability is usable only in places where the surface upon which the earthshaker stands is in direct contact with the earth. Thus, it could be used underground, on the bottom floor of a building, or outside, but not on a ship or the second story of a building. The earthshaker can use tremor a number of times per day equal to half his earthshaker level.

Geyser (Su): Once per day as a full-round action, a 4th-level earthshaker can cause the earth to rupture, spewing forth gouts of hot water. To use this ability, the earthshaker must designate a point on the ground up to 100 feet away to which he has line of effect. A geyser erupts from that point, showering a 10-foot-radius area with rock and scalding water. Every creature in this area takes 1d6 points of fire damage and 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage. A successful Reflex saving throw (DC 15 + earthshaker's Charisma bonus) halves both kinds of damage. In addition, each creature within 5 feet of the geyser must make a successful DC 20 Reflex save or be thrown 10 feet away from the point of origin and knocked prone, taking 1d6 points of damage.

This ability is usable only in places where the surface upon which the earthshaker stands is in direct contact with the earth. Thus, it could be used underground, on the bottom floor of a building, or outside, but not on a ship or the second story of a building. Geyser can be used twice per day at 7th level and three times per day at 10th level.

Greater Tremor (Su): At 6th level, the earthshaker can produce an unusually powerful tremor. This effect functions like the tremor ability, except as follows. The effect lasts for 2d4 rounds and affects all creatures within a 30-foot radius of the earthshaker. The DC for the Balance check to avoid falling down increases to 15 + earthshaker level, and all creatures in the area are considered to be engaged in violent motion for the purpose of Concentration checks. The earthshaker can use greater tremor once per day.

***Earthquake* (Sp):** At 8th level, the earthshaker gains the ability to cast

EARTHSHAKER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Earth domain, tremorsense (5 ft.)	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Tremor	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Tremorsense (10 ft.)	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Geyser 1/day, tremor 2/day	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Tremorsense (15 ft.)	+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Greater tremor, tremor 3/day	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Geyser 2/day, tremorsense (20 ft.)	+1 level of existing class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	*Earthquake*, tremor 4/day	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Tremorsense (25 ft.)	+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	*Earthquake* 2/day, geyser 3/day, tremor 5/day	+1 level of existing class

ICESINGER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Frostbitten, haunting lament	+1 bard level
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Cold spell	+1 bard level
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Bardic music, indifference	+1 bard level
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Cold spell	+1 bard level
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Fingers of frost	+1 bard level
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Cold spell, song of sorrow	+1 bard level
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Frost weave	+1 bard level
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	Cold spell	+1 bard level
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Subzero soul	+1 bard level
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Cold spell	+1 bard level

earthquake once per day (caster level equals character level). At 10th level, the earthshaker may cast *earthquake* two times per day.

ICESINGER

People respond in different ways to tragedy. Some become angry; others are strengthened by their ordeals. A few, however, are filled with a despair so great that their souls become as cold as ice, spurning all warmth and joy. These are the icesingers—men and women who have been emotionally scarred to the point of utter desolation and indifference. Icesingers channel their chilling despair into song and pass their pain to all who can hear them.

All icesingers must have at least some experience with music in order to craft their songs of pain. Some icesingers use their powers to prevent others from experiencing the anguish they themselves have endured. Some, fueled by an icy hatred of joy and warmth, simply seek to bring pain to all they encounter.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the icesinger prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Icesingers gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: Icesingers cast spells as bards. At 1st level and every icesinger level thereafter, the character gains new spells per day and spells known as if she had also gained a level in the bard class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (such as bardic knowledge). This essentially means that she adds her icesinger level to her bard level (even if that is 0), then determines spells per day, spells known, and caster level accordingly.

Frostbitten (Ex): At 1st level, the icesinger's body begins to adapt to cold. She gains resistance to cold equal to her icesinger level.

Haunting Lament (Su): At 1st level, the icesinger can play a song so mournful and haunting that listeners can't help but become lost in their own memories of painful and grieving times. This ability works exactly like the *fascinate* function of the bardic music ability, except that it affects all listeners within 90 feet regardless of whether or not they can see the icesinger, and it lasts for as long as the icesinger sings and for a number of rounds equal to her Charisma modifier afterward. Haunting lament is considered bardic music, so using this ability takes up one use of the icesinger's bardic music ability for the day.

Bardic Music: At 3rd level, the icesinger continues to advance her bardic music ability. Her icesinger levels after her 2nd level count as bard levels for all bardic music calculations, including abilities she has and the number of uses of bardic music available per day.

Cold Spell: At 2nd level and at every other icesinger level thereafter, the character chooses one spell of 1st to 6th level with the cold descriptor that she does not already know and adds it to her list of spells known. This spell can come from any class's spell list. If it is on more than one class's list, she gains it at the lowest spell level. This bonus spell known can be of a higher level than the icesinger can currently cast, but she must wait until she can actually cast the spell to use it in that case. Spells gained in this way are cast using bard spell slots, but they do not count against the maximum number of spells known.

Indifference (Ex): At 3rd level, the icesinger becomes even more cold and indifferent to others. She gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against *charm* effects and a +2 morale bonus against all other enchantment effects.

Fingers of Frost (Su): At 5th level, the icesinger can drain the heat from creatures or create a layer of ice on objects with a mere touch. As a

ICESINGER REQUIREMENTS

HIT DIE: D6

To qualify as an icesinger, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-good.

Feats: Iron Will plus either Skill Focus (Concentration) or Skill Focus (Perform [any]).

Concentration: 9 ranks.

Perform (any one): 9 ranks.

Special: Bardic music ability.

ICESINGER CLASS SKILLS

The icesinger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Dex: Hide, Move Silently.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Craft (any), Spellcraft.

Wis: Profession (any).

Cha: Bluff, Disguise, Intimidate, Perform (any).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

standard action, she can make a melee touch attack against a creature. This attack deals nonlethal cold damage equal to 1d4 + her Charisma bonus. In addition, she can use a full-round action once per hour to touch one object or surface and coat a contiguous area up to 10 feet by 10 feet with slippery ice. She can designate the exact area covered, but it must include the point touched. The affected area functions as though it were under the effect of a *grease* spell. The surface or object remains frozen for 1 hour or until it takes 10 points of fire damage, whichever comes first.

Song of Sorrow (Su): At 6th level, an icesinger can create a dour requiem that fills all who hear it with pessimism and despair. Every creature within 100 feet that hears the performance must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + icesinger's level + icesinger's Charisma modifier) or take a -2 morale penalty on saving throws against charm and fear effects and a -1 morale penalty on attack and damage rolls (minimum damage 1). An ally of the icesinger who hears the song gains a +2 morale bonus on this saving throw.

The effects of a song of sorrow last for as long as the icesinger performs and for an additional 3 rounds afterward. While performing a song of sorrow, the icesinger can fight but cannot cast spells or activate magic items by either spell completion or command word. Haunting lament is considered bardic music, so using this ability takes up one use of the icesinger's bardic music ability for the day. Haunting lament is a mind-affecting ability.

Frost Weave (Su): When the icesinger reaches 8th level, the icy pain in her soul manifests itself through her spells. Whenever she casts a spell that would normally deal acid, electricity, fire, or sonic damage, she may choose to convert all such damage to cold damage. She must make this decision at the time of casting, and she must convert all the spell's energy damage to cold when using this ability. Thus, she could cast a *shout* spell that deals cold damage rather than sonic damage. All other effects of the spell remain unchanged.

Subzero Soul (Su): At 9th level, the icesinger becomes immune to cold and all charm effects.

FIRESTORM BERSERKER

A firestorm berserker personifies the inferno. When he rages, mind and soul are transformed into a blazing, uncontrolled fire that feeds on everything. His inner self is like a dry stack of kindling, ready to erupt into flames at any moment.

In the beginning, the fire of his rage burns only within, showing no outward sign of its presence. Later, however, the flames of his fury begin to manifest themselves in combat. Eventually, the firestorm berserker must battle with his own inner blaze lest it consume him.

Most firestorm berserkers are powerful barbarians. NPC firestorm berserkers often become loners and outcasts because of their dangerous and unpredictable natures, although some rise to become leaders because of those very traits.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the firestorm berserker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Firestorm berserkers gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Kindling (Ex): The firestorm berserker's inner flames can ignite with the slightest spark. He can initiate his rage at any time, even when it isn't his turn or when he is surprised. He can activate it in response to another's action, thus gaining the benefits of rage in time to prevent or ameliorate an undesirable effect.

Rage (Ex): The character's firestorm berserker levels stack with levels of the class from which he gained the rage ability for the purpose of determining his uses per day. He does not advance in any of the class's other abilities (damage reduction, fast speed, greater rage, uncanny dodge, or the like).

Inner Flame (Ex): When the firestorm berserker reaches 2nd level, his inner flame is so hot that other fires pale in comparison, and he has enough internal heat to withstand cold temperatures. While raging, he gains resistance to cold equal to his firestorm berserker level plus his Constitution bonus (if any).

Fire Immunity (Su): When the firestorm berserker rages, he is immune to fire damage.

Heat (Su): While raging, a 4th-level firestorm berserker generates so much heat that his mere touch deals an additional +1d6 points of fire damage. The firestorm berserker's metallic weapons also conduct this heat.

FIRESTORM BERSERKER REQUIREMENTS

HIT DIE: D12

To qualify as a firestorm berserker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any chaotic.

Base Attack Bonus: +8.

Intimidate: 6 ranks.

Feats: Iron Will, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Special: Rage 3 times/day.

FIRESTORM BERSERKER CLASS SKILLS

The firestorm berserker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump.

Int: Craft (any).

Cha: Intimidate.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

FIRESTORM BERSERKER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Kindling, rage
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Inner flame
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Fire immunity
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Heat
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Breathe fire
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Inner inferno
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Sheath of flame 1/day
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Ventilating shout
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Sheath of flame 2/day
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Sheath of flame 3/day

Breathe Fire (Su): At 3rd level, the firestorm berserker can expel some of his soul's flames through his mouth as a breath weapon. While raging, he can breathe fire in a 10-foot cone as a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Every creature within this area takes fire damage equal to 3d6 + the firestorm berserker's Constitution bonus (if any). A successful Reflex save (DC 10 + the firestorm berserker's level + the firestorm berserker's Constitution modifier) halves the damage. Using this ability causes the firestorm berserker's rage to end 1 round sooner than it otherwise would. He cannot breathe fire during the last round of his rage.

Inner Inferno (Ex): This ability allows the firestorm berserker to increase the duration of his rages by using his own body to fuel his inner inferno. On his turn in the round that his rage would normally end, he may opt to take 1d4+1 points of Constitution damage as a free action to gain an equal number of additional rounds of rage. Thus, if he "burned" 2 points of Constitution with this ability, his rage would last for 2 extra rounds. Once these bonus rounds are over, however, he must make a DC 15 Fortitude save (using the modified save bonus for rage) to prevent his inner inferno from continuing to consume him. If he succeeds, the rage ends normally; otherwise, he takes another 1d4+1 points of Constitution damage and continues to rage for an equal number of rounds. Immediately after those bonus rounds end, he must attempt another Fortitude save at the same DC, with the same results for success or failure. This process continues until the firestorm berserker succeeds on a saving throw or dies. In the latter case, his body is incinerated into ash on the spot.

Sheath of Flame (Su): At 7th level, the firestorm berserker can cause his flesh to erupt into flames while he is raging. Activating this ability is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, and the effect ends when his rage ends. This fiery aura does not harm the firestorm berserker or his equipment. Any creature striking the firestorm berserker with its body or a melee weapon deals normal damage, but at the same time the attacker takes a number of point of fire damage equal to 1d8 plus the firestorm berserker's Constitution bonus (if any). Creatures wielding weapons with exceptional reach are not subject to this damage. This ability can be used once per day at 7th level, twice per day at 9th level, and three times per day at 10th level.

Ventilating Shout (Su): At 8th level, a raging firestorm berserker can release all of his inner flames of fury in one great shout. Activating this ability is a standard action, and it immediately ends his rage, even if it has gone out of control through use of his inner inferno ability. Every creature within a 15-foot radius takes 1d6 points of fire damage per firestorm berserker level. Any affected creature may halve the damage with a successful Reflex save (DC 10 + the firestorm berserker's level + the firestorm berserker's Constitution modifier). The firestorm berserker is immune to this damage. The firestorm berserker can use this ability once per day.

PUREBREATH DEVOTEE

Air surrounds us always, invisible yet vital. It is heavier than the tallest mountain, yet lighter than a feather. To the purebreath devotee, there is no purer substance than the air we breathe.

A purebreath devotee believes that the only way to become as pure as air is to consume nothing else. Members of this prestige class fast for long periods of time, living only off the air they breathe, until eventually, they no longer need to eat or drink. Eventually, the purity they gain by consuming only air grants them wondrous abilities.

Characters of any class can follow this path, although monks are the most common adherents. Constantly in search of self-perfection, many monks see the lifestyle of the purebreath devotee as the path to enlightenment. Some druids take up the class to grow closer to nature, and certain clerics view it as a path to spiritual purity. NPC purebreath devotees can be found in many places, from isolated caves where they live in hermitlike seclusion to large cities where they assume powerful spiritual leadership roles.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the purebreath devotee prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Purebreath devotees gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Spells: Beginning at 1st level, a purebreath devotee gains the ability to cast a number of divine spells. To cast a spell, she must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a purebreath devotee with a Wisdom score of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Purebreath devotee bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and a saving throw against one of these spells has a DC of 10 + spell level + the purebreath devotee's Wisdom bonus (if any). When the purebreath devotee gets 0 spells per day of a given spell level (for instance, 1st-level spells for a 1st-level purebreath devotee), she gains only the bonus spells she would be entitled to based on her Wisdom score for that spell level. The purebreath devotee's spell list appears below. She casts her divine spells just as a sorcerer does; she knows all the spells on the purebreath devotee spell list and cannot add to this list.

Breatharian (Ex): At 1st level, the purebreath devotee does not need to eat or drink so long as she spends at least 8 hours a day in an environment with breathable oxygen.

Rebuke Air Creatures (Su): At 2nd level, the purebreath devotee can rebuke, command, or bolster air creatures as an evil cleric rebukes undead. For the purpose of this ability, she functions like a cleric of her total character level. This ability is usable a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier.

Mighty Lungs (Ex): At 3rd level, the purebreath devotee can hold her breath in an airless environment twice as long as she normally could before having to make a Constitution check. She can hold her breath three times as long as normal at 6th level and four times as long as normal at 9th level. This ability is usable at will.

***Zone of Pure Air* (Sp):** Upon reaching 4th level, the purebreath devotee can fill a 15-foot-radius area centered on herself with pure, fresh air and purge it of all airborne pollutants. Activating this ability requires a standard action, and the effect lasts for 1 minute (10 rounds) per purebreath devotee level unless dismissed earlier (a free action). The duration of this effect need not be consecutive rounds.

This ability creates a bubble of breathable air that moves with the

PUREBREATH DEVOTEE ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day 1	2	3	4
1st	+0	+2	+2	+2	Breatharian	0	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+3	Rebuke air creatures	1	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Mighty lungs x2	2	0	—	—
4th	+3	+4	+4	+4	*Zone of pure air*	3	1	—	—
5th	+3	+4	+4	+4	Pure body	3	2	0	—
6th	+4	+5	+5	+5	Mighty lungs x3	3	3	1	—
7th	+5	+5	+5	+5	Light as a feather	3	3	2	0
8th	+6	+6	+6	+6	Master respiration	3	3	3	1
9th	+6	+6	+6	+6	Mighty lungs x4	3	3	3	2
10th	+7	+7	+7	+7	*Mass heal*	3	3	3	3

purebreath devotee, even in an airless environment (such as underwater). Any portion of a gaseous magical effect (such as *obscuring mist, fog cloud, solid fog, stinking cloud, cloudkill, mind fog, acid fog,* or *incendiary cloud*) within the area is suppressed until the zone expires or is removed. Likewise, airborne diseases and poisons are rendered harmless as long as they are within the zone's area. Noxious stench (such as that of a ghast or troglodyte) and breath weapons that take the form of a gas do not affect the area within the air bubble. Any gaseous creature in the zone is pushed out to the nearest open space unless it makes a successful Will save (DC 10 + the purebreath devotee's level + the purebreath devotee's Charisma modifier). A new save is required each round that the creature remains within the zone, or when such a creature attempts to enter it. For this effect, the purebreath devotee counts as a caster equal to her purebreath devotee level.

Pure Body (Ex): When the purebreath devotee reaches 5th level, her constant intake of pure air renders her immune to all diseases and poisons, even magical diseases and poisons.

Light as a Feather (Su): At 7th level, the purebreath devotee gains the ability to fall slower than she normally would. She constantly functions as though affected by a *feather fall* spell unless she suppresses the effect. Suppressing the effect or renewing its use is a standard action.

Master Respiration (Ex): At 8th level, the purebreath devotee gains further mastery over her respiration and can regulate it to maximum efficiency. She gains a +2 bonus on any Constitution checks involving holding her breath or breathing. Furthermore, when in a sealed chamber, she takes damage every 30 minutes rather than every 15 minutes (see Suffocation on page 304 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details).

***Mass Heal* (Sp):** When the purebreath devotee reaches 10th level, her body, mind, and spirit are so untainted that she can extend the healing and cleansing powers of the air to those near her. Once per day, she can cast *mass heal* as a 10th-level caster.

Purebreath Devotee Spell List

Purebreath devotees choose their spells from the following list:

1st Level: *Cure light wounds, detect poison, expeditious retreat, feather fall, jump, purify food and drink, obscuring mist.*

2nd Level: *Calm emotions, cure moderate wounds, delay poison, fog cloud, lesser restoration, levitate, see invisibility, wind wall, whispering wind.*

3rd Level: *Cure serious wounds, dispel magic, fly, gaseous form, gentle repose, gust of wind, haste, remove blindness/deafness, remove curse, remove disease, water breathing.*

4th Level: *Air walk, atonement, break enchantment, control winds, cure critical wounds, death ward, freedom of movement, neutralize poison, quench, solid fog.*

PUREBREATH DEVOTEE REQUIREMENTS

HIT DIE: D8

To qualify as a purebreath devotee, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Knowledge (nature): 4 ranks.

Feats: Endurance, Iron Will.

Special: The candidate must go three days without eating, drinking, or using magic items that prevent hunger or thirst. A character can go without fluids for 1 day plus a number of hours equal to her Constitution score. After this time, she must make a successful Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. A character can go without food for 3 days with no consequences other than growing discomfort. Thereafter, she must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Characters who have taken nonlethal damage from lack of food or water are fatigued (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 301). Nonlethal damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets food or water as needed—not even magic that restores hit points (such as *cure light wounds*) heals this damage.

PUREBREATH DEVOTEE CLASS SKILLS

The purebreath devotee's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.

Dex: Balance, Move Silently, Tumble.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Craft (any), Knowledge (nature).

Wis: Heal, Listen, Profession (any), Spot, Survival.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Revised Psionics Preview #1
New Psionic Races

BY BRUCE R. CORDELL

If you haven't heard, the *Psionics Handbook* is due for some changes. These changes, due in April 2004, debut in a book called the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. After a revision of the core rules, the psionics rules cried out for an adaptation. When the foundation on which all rules are based undergoes change, so too must a system as significant as psionics.

But of course, it goes further than that. The *Psionics Handbook* went a long way toward integrating the psionics rules of earlier editions into the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS core rules using level-based powers instead of ad-hoc power acquisition. This was a good first step, but in hindsight we believe that we could have done some things better.

Now we're going to do exactly that with the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. Lest you worry that we've left sleeping giants lie with a half-hearted revision, worry no more! We've dug up every potential and proven problem and examined each one in the revealing light of experience.

Were you troubled over 3.0 psionics' reliance on multiple ability scores? That's no longer a concern. Were you less than thrilled with non-scaling damaging powers in the *Psionics Handbook*? Now, many of your powers can be augmented to scale (and not just powers that deal damage) if you pay the requisite price in power points. Were you upset that 3.0 psionic combat deals debilitating ability damage? Be assured that you have nothing more to fear in that regard.

Why are we calling it the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*? Well, aside from the fact that we wanted to point out that we've updated psionics, we wanted to get the word out that this book is bigger than the original. Flip open your copy of the *Psionics Handbook*, and you'll see that the page count ends at 160. The new book has 224 pages. That's a lot of room, not only for changes and clarifications but also for additions.

Additions include new base psionic classes, new prestige classes, new powers, new feats, guidance for epic psionic characters, and much more. One of our favorite new additions is a chapter detailing new psionic races!

PSIONIC RACES

In retrospect, it seems strange that a book that introduced a system as reliant on the mind and body of a character as psionics lacked information on races for whom psionic ability comes naturally. Of course, space was at a premium in the *Psionics Handbook,* but that was not one of our hurdles this time.

The *Expanded Psionics Handbook* contains full-blown *Player's Handbook*-style race entries for nine races. Some are new, such as the potently psionic elan, the androgynous dromite, the dangerous maenad, and the mentally invigorated xeph. Other new races give old favorites a new lease on life; after all, why should duergar, githzerai, githyanki, and thri-kreen forever be relegated to the pages of monster bestiaries when they deserve race write-ups for easy integration as player characters? Finally, hailing from the same sandy world as the thri-kreen come the bigger-than-life half-giants, fleeing a world where psionics was an ingrained way of life.

Many of the races in this chapter have psilike abilities that function very much like spell-like abilities. However, the time has come for psionics to fully embrace the idea that creatures who use psionics use psionics, not some bastardization of spellcasting. Thus psi-like abilities were born.

Most of the races in this chapter also inherently possess a small number of psionic power points. In fact, to be considered a psionic character or creature, one must possess either psionic power points (like characters who take a psionic class or some of these psionic

player character races) or possess psi-like abilities (like many creatures in the monster chapter as well as some of these psionic player character races). Any creature that is noted as having psionics in the *Monster Manual* is also, of course, considered a psionic creature.

Some of the psionic races described in the *Expanded Psionics Handbook* possess level adjustments. Because level adjustments are a bane to characters who want to take levels in any power-manifesting class, the level adjustments are few, but a few of the new races are so buff that balance demanded it. For instance, the dromite and the half-giant have +1 level adjustments. As before, githyanki and githzerai remain at +2. The thri-kreen have a level adjustment of +2, but add to that their racial HD, and their total equivalent character level soars all the way to 4th. Thri-kreen are deadly combatants, make no mistake.

Now, you're probably expecting this article to showcase one of the new races that you'll find in the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. That would be cool, but come April, you'll end up seeing that race again when you get your copy of the book. How much better would it be if we used this article as an opportunity to showcase an entirely new psionic race that highlights the changes described above but has the added benefit of being unique and useful—something that makes you happy that you keep back copies of *DRAGON* around for reference?

SYNAD

Synads seem unsocial to the naïve. In truth, each synad is a group unto himself, being composed of three fully independent minds fused into a cooperating whole. While most races must deal with the crushing loneliness of a wholly closed-off mind, synads reap the benefits of combined thought, cooperative planning, and multiple viewpoints on each new task or topic.

Personality: While synads have wildly varying personalities, their three-fold minds function in a particular way that gives the race recognizable personality traits. A synad's three-fold mind is composed of parts that are often referred to as the overmind, the collective, and the oracle. Most of the time, the overmind controls the synad's actions. However, sometimes the collective or the oracle rises to the surface, either bypassing the overmind or mentally advising the overmind on topics either is most suited to understand.

Physical Description: A synad passes for a tall, thin human, but if the synad has exhausted all of its power points for the day, its normally visible head appears bracketed by two ghostly heads completely void of hair, eyes, ears, mouth, or nose. For this reason, most synads avoid draining their power point reserve, lest their true nature be revealed.

Synads typically stand just over 6 feet tall and weigh about 170 pounds. Men are somewhat taller and heavier than women. Synads are often hairless, have pale skin, large dark eyes, and long expressive fingers. They dress commonly, but enjoy impressive, sometimes flamboyant headwear.

Relations: Synads mix with members of other races, especially humans. Sometimes those relations undergo a sudden shift when another creature gains sudden insight into a synad's true nature (see Physical Description above), so synads avoid draining their power points when possible or prepare their comrades with the truth about their true heritage.

Alignment: Synads tend toward no particular alignment, not even neutrality. The best and the worst are found among them.

An overmind's alignment is usually determined by the components of its subminds—lawful, evil, good, or chaotic. Rarely, the two subminds might be diametrically opposed. For instance, the collective might be good, while the oracle evil. When this happens, the synad seems erratic, willful, and essentially chaotic.

Synad Lands: Synads hail from a parallel world reachable through the Plane of Shadow. The few that have colonized the Material Plane prefer to forget their world of origin, claiming that monstrosities of the mind roam there unhindered.

Religion: Synads often worship Fharlanghn, particularly drawn to his aspect as a traveler. Synads give Fharlanghn credit for their escape from their world.

Language: Synads speak Common and their own unique language.

Names: Synad names vary greatly, mainly because synads have, as a group, thrown off their original culture and adopted human names. Thus, the names of humans in the area where a synad has settled become a likely pool. Synads who mate and produce children name them after local heroes or great leaders.

Adventurers: Synad adventurers are akin to humans in their daring and ambition. Because a synad's three-fold mind can withstand mental effects that might leave another creature drooling or subservient, synad adventurers have a reputation for great mental toughness.

Synad Racial Traits

- Aberration Type: Synads are not subject to spells or effects that affect only humanoids, such as *charm person* or *dominate person*.
- Medium: As Medium creatures, synads have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Synad base land speed is 30 feet.
- Naturally Psionic: Synads gain 3 bonus power points at 1st level, one each for the overmind, the collective, and the oracle. This does not grant synads the ability to

manifest powers unless they gain that ability through another source, such as levels in a psionic class.

• Mental Obfuscation (Su): Synads use their three-fold mind to their advantage when resisting mental attacks. The combined mind grants a synad character a +2 bonus to Will saving throws.

• Oracle (Su): The part of a synad's mind known as the oracle grants the character a daily precognitive edge. Essentially, the edge translates into a floating +2 insight bonus that the synad can apply at any time to either an initiative roll, an attack roll, or a saving throw. In the case of an attack roll or saving throw, the synad can elect to apply the bonus to the roll or save after he determines whether his unmodified roll misses. Only one precognitive edge may be applied by the synad per day.

• Collective (Su): The part of a synad's mind known as the collective allows the synad to tap into a racial network of knowledge and information. A synad can spend one power point as a free action to gain a +2 bonus to any Knowledge or Psicraft check he makes.

• Multitask (Su): A synad's three-fold mind can temporarily separate, allowing the character to take more than a single mental action during his turn. Once per day, a synad can spend a power point as a free action to gain a free standard action that the synad can use to take any purely mental action. The mental action may be using a Knowledge, Psicraft, or other skill check requiring only mental cogitation. The mental action could also be the manifestation of a psionic power; however, the synad can only manifest a power with its extra mental action if the normal actions allowed the character during the round do not also involve manifesting a power.

• Automatic Language: Common and Synadic. Bonus Languages: Any (other than secret languages, such as Druidic). See other racial lists for common languages or the Speak Language skill (page 82 of the *Player's Handbook*) for a more comprehensive list. The portion of a synad's mind known as the collective exposes them to a wide range of languages.

• Favored Class: Any. A multiclass synad's first chosen multiclass does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing (see XP for Multiclass Characters in the *Player's Handbook*).

Check out issue #316 for Revised Psionics Preview #2.

Art By Wayne Reynolds

D&D MINIATURES
UNDER COMMAND

Using the New D&D Miniatures in Your RPG

by Michael Donais and Jesse Decker · cartography by Christopher West

The new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS miniatures have made it easier (and cheaper!) than ever to play D&D with great-looking miniatures. Along with the miniatures, there's a new set of fast-playing tactical skirmish rules that offer a great excuse to play with little plastic orcs without all the fuss of finding a DM. Although this series will focus more on D&D rules and the D&D game, it will also include expert tips for skirmish game strategy from the game's designers and developers. This first article in the series features two warbands to get you started, short D&D encounters with each warband for the DM to use, and rules for incorporating some of the cool terrain tiles from the skirmish rules into your D&D game.

The first warband is an easy-to-assemble lawful evil group based around the useful, common Half-Orc Fighter. The second warband is a vicious chaotic evil warband designed to rend the opposition in the name of Lolth.

THE PREDATORS

LAWFUL EVIL (100 POINTS TOTAL)

1 Half-Orc Fighter (commander)	21 points
2 Half-Orc Monks	34 points for both
1 Human Executioner	15 points
1 Wight	13 points
1 Wolf Skeleton	9 points
2 Human Thugs	8 points for both

This warband has a lot going for it. First of all, it is made with a common commander and uncommon followers. Because there are no rare creatures in the warband, it's easy to assemble or trade for the necessary components of the band. Second, the warband has a nice synergy with its commander. The Half-Orc Fighter gives his followers a +2 bonus to melee attacks, and all of the troops are focused on melee combat. Another nice synergy is the inclusion of a Human Executioner with the highly mobile Half-Orc Monks. The monks can move in quickly to take out an enemy commander, leaving the executioner free to decimate opposing figures once they are out of command (the Human Executioner has a bonus to attack and damage against creatures that are out of command). Even if the monks don't kill the commander, they can use their stunning attacks to stun him or her, causing the other enemy models to be out of command. Like the monks, the Wolf Skeleton has a good speed, so it can run around enemy melee figures to attack unprotected archers or commanders.

When playing this warband, keep one thing in mind: Just because the Half-Orc Monks and the Wolf Skeleton have good speeds doesn't mean they should charge to the attack before the rest of the band is ready to engage. Splitting up your forces will weaken your offensive push. It is best to move the monks slowly until your entire warband can engage, then move the monks to attack whichever models are most vulnerable. If you're lucky, you will be able to position your commander in such a way that he can give most of your units the +2 bonus to attack without getting killed himself.

If you want to play this warband but can't trade for all the creatures that you need, try substituting other lawful evil creatures instead. If possible, use models that excel in melee so that you can benefit from the Half-Orc Fighter's commander effect.

THE PREDATORS IN D&D

This gang of thugs and its undead support can be a tough battle for low-level adventurers, and they could easily provide a significant threat to a small village. If a straight-up fight isn't what you're after or if the group is too big for the PCs to handle all at once, they could track the bandits to their lair and encounter the marauders in smaller groups. The series of simple encounters below uses the miniatures from the Half-Orc Predators warband. It supposes that a half-orc fighter has forged a mixed group of human and half-orc ruffians along with two dangerous undead into a respectable bandit force. Four 5th-level characters should be able to handle the series of encounters described below.

The group of bandits has holed up in a simple cave system a few miles off of the nearest road. Although the cave is large enough to shelter the entire band and difficult to find without tracking the bandits, it has one glaring disadvantage: There's only one way in or out. Realizing that they might be trapped in such a cave if guardsmen from the town ever

managed to find their hideout, the leader has stationed two sentries outside the cave at all times.

1. SENTRIES (EL 2)
As the least powerful and most expendable members of the band, two human thugs are stuck with guard duty most of the time. Only one is actively watching for approaching foes at any given time, making it relatively easy to take the group's hideout by surprise. The two thugs stand guard outside of the cave, going so far as to sleep in the open most nights. They loiter near a fire pit about 10 or 15 feet away from the cave entrance.

Human Thugs (2): CR 1 each.

Development: If confronted by opposition that is clearly more than they can handle by themselves, the thugs yell for the nearby half-orc monks. If the thugs call out, the monks arrive in 1d4 rounds.

2. SKIRMISHERS (EL 6)
The half-orc monks have claimed what might be the most comfortable section of the cave as their meditation area, and the leader of the band has not yet chosen to dispute their quarters with them.

Half-Orc Monks (2): CR 4 each.

Development: If the human thugs standing guard outside call for help, the monks run out to repel any invaders.

3. WALKING DEAD (EL 4)
The wight is smart enough to understand that it can't defeat the half-orc fighter and his band of cutthroats by itself, so it has joined with the evil group. It is simply biding its time until it can create enough spawn to overpower the group and transform them all into spawn. It keeps the wolf skeleton nearby and cowed through sheer force.

The wight and its skeletal wolf lackey have holed up in a side cave. The entrances to this section of the cavern are littered with rubble, making entering or leaving the side cavern silently nearly impossible for any character walking on the ground. Treat all areas where rubble is shown on the map as heavy rubble. See Chapter 3: Adventures in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information on rubble and other terrain effects.

Wight: CR 3.

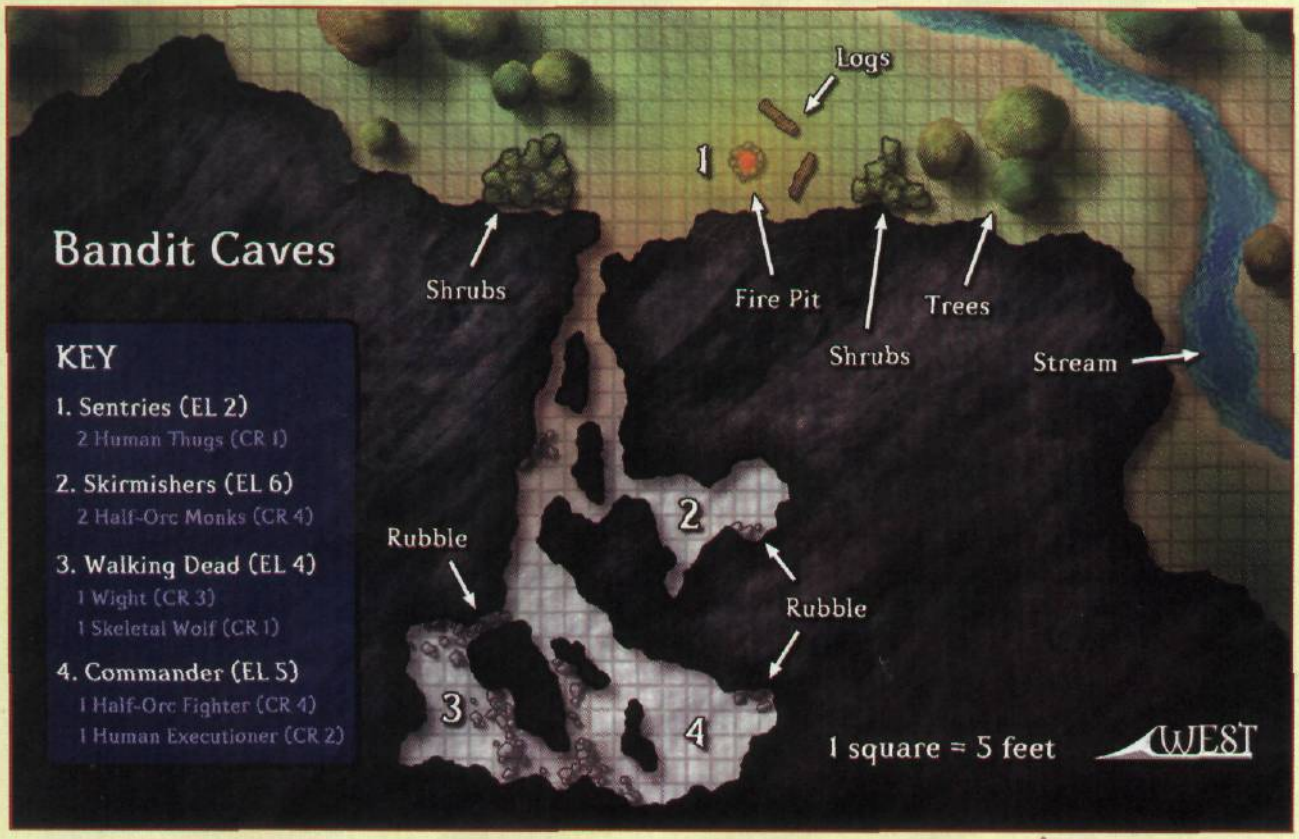
Wolf Skeleton: CR 1.

Development: The wight has its own interests in mind first. It stays out of the fighting if possible unless it sees a chance to rush into combat and kill a wounded creature quickly. If it gets a chance to do this (to its bandit compatriots or an adventurer), it knows that it will quickly have a spawn servant and a good chance at killing all of the creatures present.

4. COMMANDER (EL 5)
Ortag, a half-orc fighter, and his most trusted henchman wait in the driest and warmest section of the group's small hideout. Although he knows that the wight might eventually turn on him, Ortag knows that if he stays in control and recruits more living members, he has the beginnings of what could be come a powerful bandit gang. The two are awake but not especially alert, and therefore might not hear a conflict at the front of the cave unless one of the sentries manages to call for help.

Ortag, Half-Orc Fighter: CR 4.

Human Executioner: CR 2.



DEVELOP STRATEGY

When building your own warband look for synergies. If possible, choose units that make good use of your commander's command effect. Build a unit based off of some archers and the Arcane Archer or some halflings and gnomes with the Cleric of Yondalla. Try to avoid models that are too difficult for your best commander to command.

If you don't have enough models to make warbands in all four factions, pick one or two factions with commanders you like, and trade for more units in those factions.

Sometimes, a few low-cost (3 points or so) creatures can really help out a warband by providing your heavy hitters with a flanking bonus or providing a screen for your easily killed archers, spellcasters, and commanders. An archer army with no one capable of slowing down the enemy's advance won't last long.

If someone keeps beating you with the same warband, look for something that exploits any weaknesses of his specific warband. Clerics can turn undead. Figures with high Armor Class can destroy an army that deals lots of damage but has a low attack bonus. Area affect spells can be used to destroy swarms of minis with low hit points. Stunning attacks and fear spells can be good against expensive models that don't have great saves.

RENDERS OF LOLTH

CHAOTIC EVIL (99 POINTS TOTAL)

1 Drow Cleric of Lolth (the commander)	42 points
2 Trolls	54 points for both
1 Orc Warrior	3 points

This simple warband uses the only commander capable of commanding the mighty Trolls. The Troll is one of the most fearsome melee units in the game: It gets two attacks at +9 each, it rends for an extra 15 points of damage, it regenerates, it has 60 hit points, and this army includes two! The main weakness of the Troll is that it has Difficult 5, meaning that only commanders with a Command rating of 5 or higher can keep the unruly Trolls under command. The Drow Cleric of Lolth is the only chaotic evil model with commander 5.

Fortunately the drow cleric can do a lot more than just command trolls. She can start by casting *magic weapon* on both of the trolls and then stand back and cast *slashing darkness* on anyone she can see. Since slashing darkness has no save, three *slashing darkness* spells deal a guaranteed 30 points of damage. If one of your opponent's figures has a really high Armor Class, try to hit it with *slashing darkness* to aid your trolls. Once you cast all of your *slashing darkness* spells, move your cleric in and use *inflict moderate wounds* spells. Even if the enemy makes his saving throw, he still takes 5 points of damage.

When playing this army, don't rush to engage the enemy. Take some time to cast your *magic weapon* spells. However, try to move up far enough that if one of your Trolls fails a morale check and starts to flee, he doesn't make it off the map with one double move. Your drow cleric, with her high commander rating, has a good chance of rallying fleeing Trolls. If you're lucky, you can use the Orc Warrior to flank with one of your Trolls. This gives both the Orc Warrior and Troll a +2 bonus to their melee attacks, and the Troll deals an additional 5 points of damage if your commander is close due to the drow cleric's commander effect.

THE RENDERS OF LOLTH IN D&D

This vicious warband works best as a straight-up fight. Whether they come hunting the player characters or the two groups simply run afoul of each other in the Underdark, the warband provides a brutal melee challenge for groups of the appropriate level. If the DM wishes to add more story or depth to the encounter, include some documents or clues among the drow cleric's belongings. One intriguing possibility is to have the band hunting the players at the behest of a powerful illithid sorcerer. Discovering how this deadly creature came to know of the characters and their efforts to be rid of his deadly attentions could make for a series of interesting adventures. However you use them, the Renders of Lolth make a solid EL 9 encounter.

CHOOSING TERRAIN

When you create an army for two-player games, you need to choose four terrain tiles. One of the four tiles must be an assembly tile. This step seems simple, but a few properly selected and utilized pieces of terrain can make the difference between winning and losing.

The first thing to consider when choosing terrain tiles is how many ranged attackers are in your warband. If you have a lot, try to select some of the more open terrain, such as the Rubble tile. If you don't have a lot of ranged weapons, choose tiles that you can use to guard your advance, such as the Corridor tile and the Treasure Room tile. Warbands with only a little ranged firepower should have a mix so that they can set up the board based on what the opponent is playing.

The second thing to look at when determining what terrain to use is how well you can overcome damage reduction. The Sacred Circle gives units a +2 bonus to attacks and allows them to ignore damage reduction. If your main damage dealers have magic weapons, then the inclusion of the Sacred Circle is not as important. Also, if your main damage dealers do 20 points of damage or more per swing, they can overcome damage reduction that way. Choosing the Sacred Circle does not only depend on your units' offensive abilities. If you have a lot of units with damage reduction, you might want to avoid the Sacred Circle to keep your opponent from using it against you.

After looking at your ranged attackers and the type of damage your units deal, consider the Abattoir terrain tile. Units on the Abattoir tile automatically hit on a 19-20 for double damage (instead of automatically hitting for double damage on just a natural 20). If your figures already deal a ton of damage, then you probably don't need this tile. If your figures deal only 5 or 10 damage per swing, then you should probably bring the Abattoir to the table. In general, you want to make sure that if the battle occurs on the Abattoir you benefit more from it than your opponent will.

The last thing to determine is which assembly tile is best for your warband. You want to select the assembly tile that allows your army to advance the fastest, because you want a chance to rally troops before they can move off the map. Also, by moving up first, you reduce your opponent's chances of rallying his troops before they run off the map. The assembly tile with no statue allows your Small and Medium units to start off slightly closer to the center than the assembly tile with a statue. If you have multiple Large units, you will want to use the assembly tile with the statue for the same reason. If you play against a warband with long range spells such as *fireball* or *sonic burst*, you will want to make sure that your warband is not set up on your assembly tile in such a way as to get destroyed on the first round.

As you can see, putting a lot of thought into selecting your terrain tiles can provide important benefits to your warband, so choose carefully.

NEW TERRAIN IN D&D

Using D&D miniatures in D&D games couldn't be easier, but incorporating those great-looking terrain tiles takes a little more thought. If you already use the battlemats that many D&D players favor, your DM can simply lay the tiles over the battlemat wherever he likes and incorporate them into a dungeon. While the cool terrain might be fine on its own, knowing the source of magical effects can be important. The two terrain pieces in the Harbinger set that depend on magic or special materials can be brought into your D&D game easily: the Sacred Circle terrain can be introduced with a new spell of the same name, and the Blood Rock terrain just requires a new special material. Both are described below.

SACRED CIRCLE

Transmutation
Level: Clr 5
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 10 ft.
Effect: 0-ft. radius circle
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You infuse the area with divine energy and the raw power of war. This grants all attacks made within the affected area a +2 enhancement bonus, including ranged attacks made by creatures within the circle at targets outside it. In addition, all affected attacks overcome damage reduction as if they were made by magic weapons. Weapons that already have enhancement bonuses use this bonus or their own, whichever is higher, but they count as magic weapons for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction even if they do not gain any benefit from the *sacred circle*'s enhancement bonus.

BLOOD Rock

Blood rock suffuses an area in which it is placed with the pure essence of war and violence. Sacred to war gods and priests of many evil gods, blood rock causes weapons to strike harder, claws to tear deeper, and blood to flow more freely.

Five pounds of blood rock spread over a 5-foot area increases the lethality of any attack made by a creature standing in the area. Larger quantities of blood rock can affect larger areas. Double the threat range of all attacks made within an area affected by blood rock.

A creature must be touching the ground in the blood-rock-enhanced area in order to gain this benefit. This increase in threat range does not stack with the increased threat range from the Improved Critical feat, the *keen edge* spell, or from the keen weapon quality.

Simply carrying 5 pounds of blood rock around is not enough to gain the benefits of its presence. Blood rock must be placed in an area for a period of at least 48 hours before its presence is powerful enough to affect the area. Once placed, blood rock can be gathered up and placed in a new area. The new area still requires 48 hours for the effects of the blood rock to take hold.

EXCLUSIVE
DRAGONEYE PREVIEW

STALWART PALADIN

The Stalwart Paladin combines the strengths of the Lawful Good faction (high AC, healing, good morale) into one low-cost package. The Stalwart Paladin is a durable combatant and makes an excellent support figure.

DIRE LION

This mighty creature fights for either Lawful Good or Chaotic Good. It has the Pounce ability, so it can make a full attack on a charge. That's especially sweet because the lion rends if both attacks hit.

BRASS DRAGON

In *Harbinger™*, only the Lawful Evil faction had a flying creature. The Brass Dragon gives that excellent mobility to Chaotic Good. Flight lets you place the Brass Dragon in a tactically optimal position for its two breath weapons—fire and sleep. Since elves are immune to sleep, the dragon's cone of sleep is especially handy.

THE LEPER'S HAND

by Thomas Harlan · illustrated by Eric Polak

{ *Jerusalem, Summer, AD 1114* }

Harold Godwinson, novice of the Order of the Pilgrim Knights, knelt easily on age-worn sandstone, broad hands resting on his thighs, eyes unseeing. Evening prayers had come to an end, leaving the Temple of Solomon empty and quiet. The young Saxon knight welcomed the silence filling the Chapel of Saints; confession had failed to ease his conscience.

I should have told father confessor everything, Harold thought wearily. *Would his penitence be worse than this?*

Though he was young and strong, Harold was exhausted. Day passed in vigorous exercise in the practice-yards of the Temple, yet night's sleep was elusive—and rest impossible. There were too many phantoms plaguing his dreams, none of which his blade could cleave.

When the voice of Christ should fill his thoughts with peace, faint, half-remembered screams and pleading cries tormented the young knight. When the ascetic Rule of the Order should guide his mind and soul ever closer to the ideal of the Savior's knighthood, Harold found cruel old memories rousing themselves at the slightest provocation.

Blue-green flame roared above an altar of stone, terrible heat beating against his face, making his armor pop and glow as he forced himself to his feet one last time . . .

The Saxon's eyes fell from the age-blackened cross hanging on the wall, passed over a bejeweled box half-wrapped in fire-gold silk, and fell to his hands. They were tanned, calloused, scarred from a hundred skirmishes and fights in the dry Judean hills. His fingers were trembling. The young knight forced them together in prayer, trying to settle his mind with the *pater noster*—failed—and opened the front of his tunic. He drew out a dirty glass disc on a copper chain and rose to his feet.

A young, raffish-looking Italian—blood streaming from his mouth and nose—lunged desperately at the throat of an inhuman priest, snatching at something like a burning star . . .

The reliquary of the Chapel was filled with the tribute of all Christenden. Golden goblets from Rome, lengths of silk gifted by Genoese and Venetian merchants, caskets of coin and loose pearls, iron boxes filled with slivers of the True Cross, bags of saintly bones and enameled martyr's skulls, crosses inlaid with silver and amethyst. Harold was a poor man—every knight of the Order had foresworn every kind of wealth, to better serve his God—but the prize in his hand weighed on his mind. He wondered, staring at the chipped dull glass, if giving up this thing—which had been so costly to acquire—would buy him peace of mind.

Lad, will you drown or let yourself swim?

Harold shuddered, trying to block out the sound of his squire's voice. Old Manwys was dead and buried. With a jerk, the Saxon dragged the chain over his head—

The Welshman staggered, pierced by wickedly barbed spears, armor rent and torn, blood streaming down his thighs, but his oak-like wrists were still strong enough to pull back his yew-bow . . .

—and then Harold paused, listening intently.

The faint chiming sound of spurs skittered across the floor. Harold turned, wondering which of his brother-knights would be rude enough to enter the church in armor. Four men were moving quickly and silently down the pillared hall leading into the reliquary. Instinct drove the young knight's hand to grasp for his sword-hilt, but his fingers closed on empty air.

Hughes de Payen, Grand-Master of the Poor Knights of Solomon, did not countenance anyone to go armed within the Temple. Wary, Harold stepped back into the shadow of a fluted stone pillar reaching up into darkness. The glass disc slipped back into his tunic. He readied himself, wondering why three belted knights and a boy—a servant or a squire?—were abroad in the Temple at such a late hour.

Three men emerged from the gloom. Their faces were obscured by heavy felted cloaks, but the young Saxon was instantly sure none of them

were brother knights. *None of us owns such finery . . .*

"Very pious, these Templars," the lead man growled, fingering a thick reddish beard and staring at the altar gleaming in the candlelight. The other two—Harold guessed they were sergeants—moved past, staring suspiciously into the darkened pews. "So many riches to honor the Lord while they wear homespun and eat gruel. Fools!"

Whirling around, cheap iron rising in guard, the Saxon felt his turning foot slip unexpectedly on a loose pearl.

Red-beard began searching carefully among the boxes. The others returned to his side, nervous and alert. Harold eased back around the pillar to keep them in view. All three were armed and, by the faint scrape of metal rings against leather, armored under the thick cloaks. He tensed, preparing himself to strike.

"Ah," Red-beard turned back the length of golden silk and eased the jewel-encrusted chest out onto the altar itself. "Just as our horse-merchant described. . . ."

He ran thick fingers across rubies, sapphires and amber; paused for a moment to rub the side of his thumb against a particularly brilliant blue gem, and then—grunting—he hoisted the whole coffer out. "Here, Fulk, take . . ."

Harold moved just as all three men turned toward the box. He stepped out, snatched a dagger from Fulk's belt, flipped the knife reversed in his hand and slashed down, cutting the sergeant's belt with a sharp jerk.

"Hey now!" Fulk stiffened, spinning around, hands groping for his sword. Harold smashed the knight's nose with a stiff forearm, knocking the thief directly into Red-beard.

There was a shout, the coffer spilled to the floor with a crash and broke apart. Jewels, baubles and gems scattered everywhere. Red-beard staggered back.

The third man—Harold caught sight of fierce blue eyes over a sharp nose—spun, lunging for his sword in time for the Saxon to jam the captured dagger through his reaching hand, the cloak, and into the hidden mail beneath. Blue-eyes choked back a scream. Harold wrenched the man's sword free from its scabbard.

Whirling around, cheap iron rising in guard, the Saxon felt his turning foot slip unexpectedly on a loose pearl. His arms windmilled, the tip of his captured sword cleaving the air only inches from Red-beard's nose. Harold almost caught his balance—saw the grinning servant swing a staff at his buckling knee—and crashed down on one hip. He felt a shocking pain shoot up his side and Red-beard kicked him hard in the jaw.

Harold's head snapped back, blood in his eye, and Fulk stamped in, giving him the boot again, right in the ribs. The Saxon felt air rush from his lungs, tried to shout for help, and got the heel of Red-beard's riding boots in the gut for his trouble. Then he could only gasp, twitching on the floor, while Fulk recovered his belt and sword; the blue-eyed one hissed in agony, working the dagger free from his hand; and Red-beard shook his leonine head sadly, picking through the debris on the floor.

"Stupid novice," Red-beard grumbled, gingerly picking up a withered leathery brown mass. "We're not here for gold or jewels—only this . . ." He wrapped *le man* in cloth from the altar, and gestured with his head for the others to follow. "Quickly now, we'll be late to meet Darazi."

Fulk made to kick Harold again, giving him a surly glare, but Harold could only lie still, trying to breathe. His attention was fixed on the blue-eyed man with murderous eyes, a bloody dagger in his good hand.

"*Now*, you two." Red-beard's voice was sharp. "Padrig, you'll put that knife away."

Fulk and Padrig turned away, displeased, and padded off into the gloom after their master. Harold let his head slump back, breath wheezing between jarred teeth. A groan escaped, echoing up around the pillars. By main effort, he managed to roll on his side—the gems scattered on the floor dug painfully into his spine—and realized the servant boy was kneeling by the altar, hands busy among the fallen jewels.

"Aye now," Harold wheezed, "those are the Savior's tribute. . . ."

The boy sprang lightly to his feet, frowning at the fallen knight, and darted away between the pillars.

Groaning again, Harold rolled over and forced himself to his knees. Blood spotted the floor. He crawled to the broken box, finding the interior filled with bits of dirt and scraps of old leather. There was a noisome, unhealthy smell. Shaking his head, the Saxon stood up, surveying the damage. *What a mess! So much for a quiet evening of prayer, just the Risen Christ and I.*

Dreading what Grand-Master de Payen, or even the prelate in charge of the chapel might say at the sight, Harold gathered up the splintered wood, the dirty wrappings, the gems and jewels, and hid everything behind the altar. He'd already decided to tell no one of the theft.

I've let this happen, he thought, feeling anger stir in his breast as he limped toward the main hall of the Temple, *and I'll sort the matter out myself.* Then he paused, remembering how easy it was for the unwary to go astray in the Holy Land.

"Would be wise to tell—ah, the boy missed one. . . ."

Harold bent down, picked up the irregular blue jewel and tucked it away in his purse as he strode out of the Chapel. The throbbing pain in his temples drowned out the memories of Golonza screaming as his flesh was burned away, for the moment at least.

"Get up, old woman. Day is waiting to see your merry face!"

Harold poked a ratty bundle of black cloth beneath a woolen blanket with his fingertip and was rewarded with an irritated mutter. Then, as the travel-worn black robe and threadbare garments shifted, with a baleful stare.

"By the God above, you must be drunk as the ostler's cat to dare my temper at this hour." Theodora's reedy voice was thick with sleep, eyes obscured by a tangle of stringy white hair, and a wrinkled hand emerged from the blanket to seize on a stout-looking walking cane with an

age-worn iron head. "Why didn't that flying rat—"

The nun's gaze fixed on the tiny brown-and-white shape of little Athené, who was perched on Harold's shoulder, claws sunk into the leather shoulder of his jerkin.

"Traitor!" Theodora croaked, sitting up, drawing the blanket around thin shoulders, and taking a swig from an oily-looking flask beside her pallet before making a face at the owl. "I'll have you gutted, stuffed, and sold to dirty-fingered infidel children by sunup!"

Harold cleared away a litter of books, melted candle-stubs, and mangy bits of parchment from the end of the nun's stone bed and sat down. The owl hopped onto his outstretched arm, walked daintily down to the straw padding and ruffled her feathers once before crawling under the blanket.

"I've brought breakfast," the Saxon knight said, wincing a little as Theodora's sharp fingers prodded at the gash on his jaw. "Don't mind that. It'll heal straightaway."

"You've been brawling?" The nun sniffed, rummaging in the sack of freshly baked bread Harold had set on the floor. The sharp odor of yeast and hot bricks rose up, driving back the earthy, cave-like smell of Theodora's sleeping chamber. Jerusalem was still half-abandoned, but her taste in residence was . . . ghoulish. "No oil? No olives? What kind of barbarian *faranji* are you?"

"I'm not French," Harold said mildly, helping himself to one of the loaves. "I was sitting vigil in the Chapel of the Saints in the Temple and three knights attacked me."

"Very peaceful among the pews," Theodora snorted; stuffing hot, crisp bread into her mouth. "Why did you deflower their sisters if you didn't expect to be beaten soundly?"

Harold raised an eyebrow, slathering fresh-churned butter on his loaf. "I'm not sure Fulk of Garonne and Sigurd Sigurdsson *have* virgin sisters, old woman, but if they did, I'm sure they would be pleased to dally with *me*."

"Sigurdsson?" Theodora's eyebrows rose, two thin, sharp white lines against her olive forehead. "Why would one of Patriarch Arnulf's liegemen attack you? Has your master de Payen fallen into quarrel with the Church?"

"I don't know," Harold shrugged, devouring the bread. "But they broke into the reliquary and stole the Hand of Naaman."

Theodora grunted, face pinched up in thought. "This would be the leper cured of his ills by Christ Savior? How did the Temple come by his *hand*? And where is the rest of him?"

"The Hand was given to the Temple as a gift," Harold said. "In a big jeweled box. Which is . . . uh . . . broken now—but well hidden! If we can get the Hand back before morning services, I'm sure no one will notice. . . ."

"Perhaps." Theodora crawled out of the blankets with a snarl and dragged her sandals from a basket of moldy thigh-bones she'd dumped from the wall alcoves to make room for books and scrolls. "I wonder what the holy Arnulf expects in return?"

Harold laughed. The Patriarch of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher—the single most influential priest in the Holy Land and the close confidante and ally of King Baldwin—was perhaps the least holy and least pious man the young knight had ever heard of, much less met. Arnulf's corruption and avarice were legendary in the city. "Do you know where Darazi is camped?"

"Why would one of Patriarch Arnulf's liegemen attack you?"

"We?" Theodora spat out the bread in her mouth. "I'm not so easily bought! It'll take more than a few scraps of moldy, burnt, weevil-infested grain to get me out of bed in this cold!"

"Fine." Harold raised his hands. "But do you know where a horse-merchant named Darazi could be found?"

"Darazi, you say?" Theodora settled back in the blankets, leaning her old head against a marble panel showing fat-tailed sheep, eyeless shepherds, and sheaves of grain. The basement where she lived was a hole knocked in the ceiling of an old tomb. The building above was a rug merchant's and smelled of dust and wool and olive-oil and bitter tea and sawdust. "There's a name I've heard recently . . . a camel-trader from the north—come down from Baalbek or those parts."

She frowned, picking at the corner of her blanket, deep in thought. "There's more to him than spit-buckets with three toes a-hoof. I've heard he's a messenger for one of the Moslem princes in Syria . . . now why would Arnulf's man want to meet with him?"

"To give him something?" Harold wondered, wincing as he tested the edges of the wound on his jaw. The blood had clotted, leaving a thick scab. "I've heard the Hand is a sovereign cure for leprosy—perhaps Darazi's master has been afflicted?"

Groaning, Theodora stood up and shrugged on another robe. "It's cold out, isn't it? I see frost in your hair."

The Saxon shook his head. "Not at all! Well, perhaps—for you thin-blooded Greeks, it might be *cool*. Tell me where he is, and I'll see to the matter myself."

"Huh!" Theodora gathered up her cane, poking at the blankets until Athené hopped out and fluttered up onto her shoulder. "I heard yesterday his tents were in the olive groves around the church in the Garden of Gethsemane." The nun squinted at Harold. "A church, I note, which is closed and shuttered while the nave and roof are repaired by Arnulf's stonemasons."

The Patriarch's dedication to restoring the physical glory of the Church could not be doubted, even if men snickered to see Arnulf acting the penitent, marveled at the wealth of his robes and vestments, and envied the beauty of his mistresses. The massive project to rebuild the Cathedral of the Holy Sepulcher itself was nearly complete, after being stalled in interdenominational disputes for decades, and dozens of other Catholic churches—fallen into ruin and disrepair during the long centuries of Moslem occupation—were being refurbished once more.

The eastern sky was still dark—and the

air *was* chill with frost, just as Theodora had feared—as Harold and the old Greek woman crept silently through a thick grove of ancient olives surrounding the Church of the Agony of Christ. The young Saxon slowed, reaching a low wall, and saw the roof-line of the old Byzantine sanctuary rise against the stars. In a curious departure from more modern structures, this oratory was arranged as an open portico flanked by towers rising on either side. Everything was overgrown with dry vines and the ancient bricks crumbled to dust at his touch.

Sometimes the old woman seemed unnatural to him, as though she could see in the dark or perceive his thoughts.

There were lights in the portico, and by their dim radiance Harold saw tents inside the nave of the ruined church. Despite the hour, the little camp had an air of wakefulness—and now he caught the muffled sound of men speaking.

"Do you hear?" Harold turned, whispering to Theodora. The nun was nearly invisible in the night, black on black, revealed only by the faint gleam of her eyes. "Go 'round to the left, make sure none of them slip away . . ."

"And you?" Theodora's teeth were chattering audibly. "You'll just plow in like a spring ram? Swinging that bloody great sword about? Will you bother to take a prisoner this time? Someone we might question?"

"Hmm." Harold paused, finding his hand already on the hilt of his sword. "I suppose I could . . ."

Crack! Theodora's cane rapped sharply on the side of his head. "Ow! Old woman, you're—"

"Paying attention, as usual." Theodora's voice was low, barely audible and angry. "You've no idea *why* Arnulf's men stole the Hand of Naaman! They might well have done so on the King's orders!"

"*Le roi* Baldwin?" Harold hissed in surprise. "But he could just *ask* De Payen for the artifact. . . ."

"Could he? Publicly?" The young Saxon could feel Theodora grinning mirthlessly in the darkness. "Then why is some itinerant Arab spy involved? No, this is a *plot*, my fine young ram, not the place for crashing in and bashing about. We need them all alive, I think."

"Fine." Harold rubbed the side of his head, regretfully releasing Wurmbiter's hilt. "No stabbing."

"Aye! And no breaking necks either," Theodora grumbled quietly. There was a soft noise as she rummaged through her robes and in the woven bag over her shoulder. "I've an idea . . . yes, I've some *valerianus* with me."

"What good will that do?" Harold was starting to feel anxious and fidgety.

"Valerian induces sleep—particularly if a man is already tired, and who wouldn't be at this foul hour?"

Harold frowned, puzzled. "You're going to make them tea?"

There was soft, mocking laughter in the darkness and the young Saxon felt the hairs on the back of his arms and neck stir. Sometimes the old woman seemed unnatural to him, as though she could see in the dark or perceive his thoughts. *That's impossible,* he reminded himself, *she's a woman of the cloth, of the Church! Not a—*

"You slip around to the uphill side, young ram, and listen for our little Athené. Then come over the wall and subdue anyone still awake—I'll see to this somnastic cure myself."

Harold nodded, glad to leave her company, and stole off through the trees and across a section of balustrade which had cracked in half and fallen into rubble. Behind him, Harold thought there was a whispering sound—almost a chanting—and then the cold night air stirred, ruffling his hair and rattling the leaves in the trees like dry bones scratching at a windowsill. For a moment, he blinked, terribly tired, and yawned.

Athené drifted over his head on soundless wings, hooting softly.

A hand clasped over his treacherous mouth, the young Saxon climbed through a window—once braced with expensive glass and wooden slats, now gaping empty—and padded between two camel-hair tents.

Harold reached down and picked up a hook-ended staff from a pile of tack and blankets stacked beside a tent. He could hear confused voices ahead and picked up his pace, running silently forward.

The broken stub of a massive pillar, firelight gleaming on one face, arched up into the night sky. The roof of the church had fallen in centuries ago, leaving a drift of broken tiles and rotting wooden beams. Harold slowed, peering around the corner—Sigurdsson was leaning over the supine body of Fulk, a puzzled expression on his broad, Nordic face.

"Get up, you lazy . . ."

Harold slashed the rod around in a sharp, flat arc. The Norwegian looked up—hearing the scrape of boot leather on stone—and the camel-staff cracked across his temple with a shockingly hollow sound. Sigurd toppled over, eyes rolling up, limbs loose as jelly. Harold vaulted over the body—two new figures had jerked up out of the dim light beyond the fire—an Arab and the blue-eyed sergeant.

"You again!" growled Padrig in a marginally understandable Breton accent. A broadsword was in his hands with a flash.

The Arab—neatly bearded, his djellaba and kaffiyeh crisp and clean—leapt back, away from the light. Letters scattered, fluttering in the air.

Padrig slashed wildly at Harold, who ducked, ramming the head of the staff into the man's stomach with the full force of both arms. Wood slammed into overlapping chain links—the man grunted, shrugged aside the blow, and hacked at the Saxon's shoulder. Harold twisted, too late to block with his staff and the broadsword rang away from the scale-mail under his tunic. The Saxon skidded sideways, his boot going into the fire, throwing up a cloud of sparks.

Padrig charged in, chopping overhand. Harold slapped the blade aside with the staff and threw a punch at the man's head. The knight staggered, clipped on the chin, then righted himself, both hands clinging to the broadsword. The Breton spat at the fire, lips bloody.

"Curse you, Saxon dog! I should've cut your throat—"

He lunged again, hewing at Harold's knee and the Saxon blocked deftly, smashing the sword-tip into the ground, then lashed up, cracking the man under the jaw, before slapping the staff sideways, rocking the Breton's head to the side with an ugly snapping sound.

The chill tickling feeling at his neck got worse—Theodora shuffled out of the darkness, cane tapping . . .

Padrig crumpled, blue eyes rolling up.

"Ah . . ." Harold suddenly remembered he was supposed to take everyone alive. He turned, swinging the staff loosely from side to side. A chorus of snores greeted him—sure enough, the camel drovers and Fulk were sound asleep. The young Saxon felt a cold chill creep along his spine. *How did she do this?*

Soft wings brushed his head and Harold twitched in alarm.

The chill tickling feeling at his neck got worse—Theodora shuffled out of the darkness, cane tapping on the ancient marbled floor, a thin-bladed knife pressed against the throat of a pale-faced Arab. The old woman sniffed in disgust, seeing the odd way the blue-eyed knight was sprawled on the ground.

"What *did* I tell you, child?"

Harold grimaced, seizing the Arab and tying both hands behind the man's back. The smell of lavender and sage tickled his nose and he sneezed. *God above,* he thought in disgust, *the infidel's had a bath today!* He suppressed a shudder.

Theodora pushed the Arab toward a folding leather campstool. "Sit, *effendi.* Harold, find the Hand."

The Arab sat as best he could with both arms twisted behind his back. The old woman sifted through the papers on the ground with the point of her cane, then she looked up, dark eyes twinkling.

"Your name is Darazi? From Baalbek or thereabouts in the north?"

The Arab nodded. He was sweating, high forehead gleaming in the firelight. "I am, as God wills."

"You're selling more than camels to these Franks, aren't you?" She unfolded one of the parchments. "This is a map of the Fatamid citadel at Ascelon, on the coast south of Jaffa. You've been there recently?"

Darazi nodded, watching Harold knock about in the tents. "Your *rafiq* should be careful, madame. Some of the things in the tents are fragile. . . ."

"My . . . comrade . . . is headstrong and careless," Theodora said, rising and drawing close to the sitting man. "But *I* am not." The tip of her dagger pressed the flesh on the side of his nose taut. "You told the Norwegian you'd been in the Moslem camp there—that you'd learned the pass codes for the night watch, the names of the guard-captains, perhaps a secret way into the citadel?"

Darazi barely moved, nodding, his eyes fixed on the darkness beyond the firelight, trying to ignore the razor-sharp blade pressing into the side of his nostril.

"You're a vain man, aren't you?" Theodora's eyes were bright with reflected flame. "You offered to trade the Norwegian these secrets for the Hand of Naaman, didn't you? But why does such a good Muslim need such a dirty, unclean *Christian* artifact?"

The Arab swallowed gingerly, then said: "My master in Damascus, he wanted the Hand for . . . for his mother—she's taken ill and—"

"Found it!" Harold appeared out of the darkness, swinging a silk bundle from one hand. He was grinning. "Smelled it right out, I—what?"

Theodora raised a finger to her lips, shaking her head. "Shush, child. Who knows who might be out in the dark?" She beckoned him over, taking the bundle out of his hands. "Now be useful and find me a bucket."

Ice-cold water splashed over the Norwegian's head, shocking Sigurd awake. Theodora, sitting close by the fire, her shoulders draped with beautifully woven blankets looted from the Arab tents, waited a moment for the man to gather his wits.

"Awake? Good." She tapped the letters with her cane. "Your master, the Patriarch Arnulf, sent you to trade the Hand of Naaman for a secret way into the fortress of Ascelon?"

Sigurd blinked, unable to focus, and then stiffened, seeing the broad-shouldered outline of Harold looming behind the woman—and Darazi gagged and bound at her side.

"A nun and a Templar . . ." The Norwegian grinned, showing blackened, crooked teeth. "Aren't the pilgrim-monks supposed to foreswear the company of women?"

Harold grimaced, rubbing the back of his head. "Well, she's *not really*—ow!"

Tilting her head to one side, the old woman twitched her cane back from Harold's knee and fixed Sigurd with a pitying stare. "You haven't been in the Holy Land long enough to pick up the local dialect, have you? These challenges Darazi gave you are *insults,* Northman. Any troop of knights you led into this trap . . ." She stabbed the sheet of parchment showing the outer works of the citadel. ". . . would have been captured or slain."

The Norseman turned a little paler as the words sank in. He stared at Darazi, who was struggling against his bonds and making muffled protests.

"You were rash to steal from the Temple of Solomon, Sigurd." Theodora dumped the papers into the fire, which made Darazi jerk as if he'd been struck by a hot poker. "But I'll save you from your folly *this time.*"

"No!" Sigurd surged forward, groping for the parchments burning merrily in the coals. Harold's fist closed in his hair, dragging the man back with a yelp. White smoke curled up from the letters as they crisped to black.

"You'd have murdered me," the young Saxon growled in his ear, "and sent hundreds of good men to their deaths! Have you seen the walls of Ascelon? High and terrible they are, and the ground before them is white with the bones of Christian soldiers perished in a dozen fruitless assaults!"

"I know this!" Sigurd wrenched himself away, face flushed with anger. "My master prays every night for the Lord to rain torment and fire upon the curst Moslem dogs and drive them from their pirate dens along the coast!" He fell on his knees, almost weeping, a trembling hand digging into the white ash. "You don't think he knows the

endless count of dead or captured pilgrims? Their coffins clog the halls of the cathedral—a bit of ancient bone and flesh is a small price to pay for the safety of the faithful on the pilgrim's road from the sea!"

Theodora's face darkened and she stood, stolen blankets slipping to the ground. "You were deceived, Northman! This peddler sold you trash and called it gilt. Come, Harold, the hour grows late."

Her wiry hand dragged the young Saxon away, leaving Sigurd staring at the crackling fire. Darazi squirmed on the ground, wrestling with his bonds. Harold looked back once, catching sight of the Norwegian reaching his hand into the fire, trying to save some scraps of the parchments.

"What—Theodora! Slow down, I can't see a thing!"

"Hurry," she hissed, dragging him through the grove of olives as fast as she dared. "We've no time at all."

"Why?" Harold ducked abruptly, avoiding a gnarled limb Theodora hadn't even noticed. "I've the Hand, the false papers are destroyed—what harm can come of—aiii!" Sharp-ended branches clawed at his face.

"The papers were real," Theodora said, turning onto the narrow lane at the edge of the Garden of Gethsemane. Through the trees she could make out the city ramparts rising beyond the dry streambed of the Kidron. The alabaster walls of the Temple were just visible off to her left, behind the black silhouette of two towers. Even at midnight, great fires burned in the courtyards, illuminating the house of God. "I've tarried in black-walled Ascelon myself—the plans were remarkably accurate, and I'm sure the passcodes would have worked too—as long as the Fatamid commander refrained from changing them . . ."

"What?" Harold seized her shoulder, dragging the old woman to a halt. "Then why did you—"

"Destroy your precious king's one chance to drive the Moslem brigands from their impregnable den?"

Theodora's face was invisible in the darkness, but the young Saxon felt the heat of her gaze like the mouth of an open forge. "Because Darazi used a term I've only heard once before—he called you my *rafiq*—my 'companion at arms,' and he *did* have the secret key to Ascelon, *and* he could only have gained it from the fortress commander himself."

She started to jog up a long, dusty ramp leading to the Gate of Jehosaphat. Harold, confused, followed, his long legs easily matching her stride.

The young Saxon recoiled. There was a sudden, intense flash of light. Theodora screamed.

"Why would this emir betray . . . himself?"

"Because," she panted, begrudging him even so much breath as she ran, "the emir's *real* master can command life, death, or any task beneath the Sun from him. Because the emir is an *Ismali'l*—an assassin as your troubadours would say. And we *cannot* allow the Assassins to gain the confidence of Arnulf *or* the King!"

Theodora knelt on the floor of the reliquary, shattered bits and pieces of the box laid out before her in a rough approximation of the broken coffer itself. The withered, black and gray Hand lay clenched like a dead spider in the center. Four wax candles were stubbed into the floor, providing a wavering, watery illumination.

"The answer is here . . ." She whispered to herself, gently moving two rubies into alignment. "You say everything else is just as it was? They didn't take anything else? Not so much as a coin?"

"Nothing," Harold said slowly, looking around the dark chamber one more time, just to make sure.

"Hmm . . ." Theodora closed her eyes, humming at the back of her throat, moving frail old hands slowly over the remains of the coffer. "Something is missing . . . I can feel . . . here." Her finger speared down, indicating a wooden fragment a hand-span wide. She turned the worm-eaten wood over, revealing a section of cracked, ancient glue. In the old adhesive there was the indentation of something irregular and sharp edged. Theodora lifted the fragment up, peering at it sideways in the candlelight.

"There are protrusions, my ram of Spring, as if whatever was pressed here were etched with lettering. . . ."

Gently, she ran her fingertips across the glue. "Such an abrupt edge—I think a piece of something was affixed to the coffer. Not a jewel, not a gem, not plated gold . . ."

Harold stiffened, eyes rising to meet hers. "Ay, I am no ram, a fumbling lamb instead!"

He reached into his purse and produced an irregular piece of brilliant blue glass. "I'd forgotten about—"

"Let me—" Theodora plucked the shard angrily from his fingers.

The young Saxon recoiled. There was a sudden, intense flash of light. Theodora screamed.

Instantly, Harold slapped the piece of glass out of the nun's hand, sending the shard flying off into the darkness. The old woman pitched over, eyes rolled up, every hair on her body stiffened straight as a ship's mast.

"Theodora!" The young Saxon grasped her shoulders, heart in his throat. Little Athenê began to hoot mournfully, fluttering agitatedly over his head. "Can you hear me? Do you live?"

She was cold and clammy to the touch.

Out in the darkness between the pillars, the blue shard of glass skittered to a halt on the floor. The intense light was fading, leaving only the dim radiance of a firefly shining between the pews. But that was enough for a slim hand to reach down and carefully gather up the fragment in a silken cloth. The figure turned and padded away, quiet as a mouse, toward the chapel doors.

"You've a soft tread," Harold growled, anger burring his voice, stepping into the walkway between the seats and blocking the youth's path to the door. "But my ears are very sharp."

"Shouldn't you be seeing to the old woman? She looks . . . sick."

The Saxon tensed, seeing the cowardly servant straighten up into a long-limbed young man with

fine-boned features and muscular, olive-brown arms. With a flourish, the youth produced a pair of wicked, curved daggers.

Harold slid Wurmbiter from its sheath, letting the elf-steel wail softly against the bronze scabbard-ring. "The old woman? She's like oak, or swamp-cured iron—stronger than she looks. You've a name?"

"Hasan," said the youth as he slid forward, dark eyes glinting with amusement, knives drifting up in languid hands. "Hasan, son of Muhammad, grandson of i-Sabbah, the master of Alamut."

"Means nothing to me!" Harold surged forward, powerful shoulders swinging the longsword into a blurring slash. Hasan sprang sideways—faster than any human the Saxon had ever seen—and Wurmbiter whined through empty air. The youth sprang in, stabbing at Harold's eyes with one blade while the other licked like a snake at the Saxon's thigh.

The knight pivoted, dragging the longsword back in a wild counter. Hasan's knife sheared through cloth, leather backing and slipped beneath the leaf-scales of Harold's hauberk. A cold shock blossomed at his side as the blade drew blood. Wurmbiter collided with the youth's blocking dagger, squealing metal on metal.

"Haaaah!" Harold slammed forward, trying to pin Hasan blade to blade and throw him into a pillar. The youth sprang up, marvelously light, hands springing from the Saxon's broad shoulders and into a tight flip. Harold swung round, powering the longsword into a blurred streak of steel to hew the Arab in two as he landed.

The blade smashed into the matching pillar across the isle, cracking marble and ancient concrete with a ringing crash.

Harold staggered back, stunned by his own blow. Hasan dropped down from a tiny ledge circling the pillar and whirled, blades flashing. One dagger nicked Harold's sword thumb at the base, drawing a grunt of agony from the Saxon, and the other pressed hard against his throat.

Hasan's eyes were black in the poor light, his face dewy with a faint sheen of perspiration.

"You should listen to your grandmother, *faranji*. She is wise, while you are slow. She is temperate, while you are mindless." Hasan grinned, showing a mouth of teeth stained dark brown. "But it is a *sin* to kill a man unless his name is upon the Black List—and your poor name is not there—not yet. Good eve, sir."

The curving knife slid along Harold's throat, pressing against taut skin, and then flickered away.

The Saxon crumpled to the floor, letting out a long, slow hiss of terrible pain. His right hand was slicked with blood, and more was oozing from the wound across his palm. "Aahhhhh . . ."

Her face tight with worry, Theodora prized back Harold's bloody fingers, exposing the wound along his thumb. He groaned, curling in on himself. Then she shook her head, relieved, and clouted the Saxon gently alongside the head with her fist.

"Fool barbarian! He missed the tendon—you'll not be crippled this time. We'll just bind you up. . . ."

Harold watched her cut relatively clean bandages from the hem of her robe, wrap his hand expertly, and then grimaced again as she uncorked a flask from her bag and spilled grain alcohol over the whole bloody mess. He felt faint. "Aiii—shouldn't I be drinking something for the pain?"

"The day is still young," the nun said waspishly, dragging him to his feet. "You can get drunk and lie about how you were wounded by a gorgon later. Where is the priest in charge of this lamentable shrine?"

The prelate of the Chapel of Saints wrinkled up a thin, pox-scarred nose at the sight of a Greek nun in his rectory, but Harold's face was known to him, and Father Craon had been in Palestine long enough to take nothing at face value.

"I am familiar with the bequest you describe," he said slowly, searching Theodora's face. "A gift from the old Queen—not our present Queen Adelaide, you understand—but from the hand of Arda, princess of Edessa."

"The Armenian firebrand the king stole from Prince Thoros?" Theodora squinted, pursing her thin lips. "Isn't she in exile?"

"Yes," Craon replied suspiciously, "*le roi* Baldwin—the Lord bless and keep him—set Arda aside several years ago—endowed the convent of St. Anne for her—but Queen became, ah, bored and demanded permission to join her parents in Constantinople."

Theodora smiled thinly. There were many displaced princes, potentates, generals, and rogues finding refuge in the Imperial Capital in these troubled times. One more wayward Armenian princess would barely be noticed in Alexius's court.

The youth sprang up, marvelously light, hands springing from the Saxon's broad shoulders and into a tight flip.

"It will be difficult to question *her* then—so you must suffice, Frenchman. Where did this box come from? Did it arrive with the Hand of Naaman within? Was it purchased locally? Who delivered it to the Temple?"

"I do not know where the artifact came from," Craon replied frostily. He did not like being treated like a mere clerk. "If memory serves—and I have a puissant recollection—they arrived as one package; Arda's gift to the Order upon her blessed wedding day."

"Which brought everyone *so much* luck and happiness," Theodora sniffed.

Craon ignored her. "I believe her father delivered the package. Thoros is now a merchant, so perhaps he acquired the . . . Hand by some . . . means."

Harold watched the two with a wary eye. Neither the priest nor the nun seemed to care overmuch for the other's look and the young Saxon was sure violence would result. His hand throbbed, beating a violent counterpoint to the drumming in his head.

"You suggest," Theodora drawled, "that Prince Thoros *stole* the Hand from someone?"

"I do not!" Craon snapped, nettled by her accusing tone. "Now, you will tell me what this is about! Has

something happened to the Hand of Naaman?"

"No, sir!" Harold blanched, looking sidelong at Theodora. The little nun had managed to reassemble the box and—somehow, the whole sequence of events was rather blurry and washed out by the constant, stabbing pain in his injured hand—put everything back in place on the altar. "I stood vigil in the chapel last night, sir, and . . . noticed the particular . . ." The young Saxon started to sweat. ". . . um, beauty, of . . . um . . ."

"I saw a blue chalice, filled with flame, bright as the sun . . ."

Theodora took hold of his arm and squeezed rather tightly. Harold clenched his jaw tight to keep from shouting with pain.

"I am intrigued by antiquities," she said, nodding to father Craon. "Good day, sir."

The prelate watched them go, still suspicious, his fingers working steadily through the rosary at his belt.

Harold lay back on the coffin-lid that served Theodora for a bed, breathing deep of tomb-must. "Just leave well enough alone," he said wearily. "My honor is saved—no one will ever guess the Hand was missing for an hour or two, the Patriarch's men traded nothing for nothing, no one will essay the walls of Ascelon over some burned letters. All is well . . ." The young Saxon raised his head enough to glare at Theodora. ". . . which ends well!"

"Very poetic," she barked, staring moodily at the stacks of moldy books and scrolls she'd collected. "You were lucky to escape the night modestly unscathed. I am not so lucky, I fear . . ."

Thin fingers pressed against her forehead, as though a terrible pressure were threatening to burst through the frail old skull.

"What do you mean?" Harold struggled up, wounded hand pressed tightly to his chest.

"There was something—a vision—when I touched the shard." She looked sickly at him. "I am afraid to set voice to something so . . . ephemeral."

"What did you see?" The young Saxon felt the queer prickling chill steal over him once more.

"I saw . . ." Theodora licked her lips nervously, hands clasped tight. "I saw a blue chalice, filled with flame, bright as the sun . . . I think . . ." She swallowed, mustering herself. "I think I saw the *Grail*."

"The . . ." Harold stared at her in horror. "Not the cup of Christ! That's impossi . . ."

His voice trailed off. He could feel his heart thudding violently, felt the rush of blood in his wounded hand, felt the hard round shape of the blue glass disc pressing into his chest.

A leaping black flame roared and burned in the sky, throwing hard-edged shadows across the mountaintop. Only Harold was left, half-blinded by the heat, Wurmbiter blazing blue-white in his hand. The cruel face of the Dread Prince loomed over him, words of power ringing against the sky, summoning cloud, lightning, storms to rage at his command.

"What if . . . what if the Grail had been broken? Shattered?" Theodora was very, very pale. "What if one piece of the Cup of Life was affixed to the coffer holding the Hand of Naaman? What if . . . the Assassins *knew* what it was—they were searching for all the pieces? What kind of power would they have then?"

Wily Ruggero was dead, his body torn apart by Petran knives. Golonza had failed to withstand the Prince's will and now lay crushed among the rocks of the canyon floor. Manwys had fallen on the ramped steps, spending the last of his arrows in a desperate attempt to give Harold just one more instant of time. . . .

Time to seize the blue disc and feel its power rush through him, healing shattered limbs, filling his desolated heart with the strength to charge into the Prince, to grapple him, hurling them both into the burning vortex where the Prince's infernal master clawed and raged, trying to burst into the world of men. Time enough to feel himself die, plunging into an abyss of fire, to see the Dread Prince's flesh sear away, to hear the awful endless screams of the dying as the earth shook beneath his feet and Hell opened up before him.

Time to live again, sustained by the ineffable power of the disc. Time to wake on the mountaintop, alive once more.

What would the whole Cup allow? Would the Almighty allow the black-eyed boy to lift the Chalice and drink deep of the power within?

Harold pressed his palms against his eyes. "You thought there was writing on the fragment?"

The Lord of Heaven allowed Manwys to die, and Ruggero and Golonza and Torfinsen. Why did he leave me alive, where they perished?

"Yes." Theodora held up a scrap of parchment, now rubbed dark with charcoal, revealing a line of angular letters. "But this is no tongue I ken, and only a few words, I would guess. . . ."

"We have to find someone who knows where the box came from." The young Saxon pressed his hands together, staring at the floor. "Where the rest of the parts of the cup might be."

Theodora nodded, watching him closely. "Yes. Have you been to the City before?"

"The city?" Harold looked up, puzzled. His face was nearly bone white. "What city?"

She laughed throatily. "There is only one *City* in the world. Constantinople. The Imperial capital. Where prince Thoros and his wayward daughter Arda are living on the Emperor's dole."

To be continued in "Hecate's Ring" in issue #316!

by Clifford Horowitz · illustrated by Christina Wald

HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC IV

{ MAGIC ITEM SETS }

Heroes of Might and Magic IV unabashedly indulges itself in tongue-in-cheek fantasy. Genies disappear into Aladdin-style lamps when slain, vampires cry "bluh" in battle, and your heroes sport names such as Bohb the Archmage and Dogwaddle the Barbarian. Much like many strategy games, you must build up your home base and assemble armies of ever better troops, but the difference lies in the oddly named heroes. The power of massed troops is undeniable, but it simply doesn't compare to a single man strutting up to a horde of dragons and killing three or more with a single swing of his mighty hammer. Heroes are the true meat of this game.

The expansion pack, *A Gathering Storm*, finds five such heroes faced with the menace of the wizard/druid Hexis, who is conjuring magic so powerful that it forms a storm that threatens the land. The five set out on their own quests to recover artifacts that together grant them the power to defeat the mad druid. These are not simply powerful items however; they are sets with complimentary enchantments that grow stronger when brought together. A sampling of these major artifacts is presented here for use in your campaign.

Each group of complimentary artifacts is presented as a set. When a creature possesses more than one item in a set, each item grows in power with each other item possessed, providing greater benefit to the possessor.

ARCHMAGE'S APPAREL

An archmage—a true archmage—is a rarity. The archmage strives to be as good in all schools as a specialist is in his one field. He does not heed the siren call to quick power by specializing, as that would cut him off from certain aspects of magic. The *Archmage's Apparel* embodies this all-encompassing view but shifts its focus. Instead of focusing on the schools of magic, these items each focus on one race's outlook on wizardry. Together these items don't grant an understanding of all magical schools but lace the bearer's magic with flavor from many races. There are five items in the *Archmage's Apparel*.

WAYFARER BOOTS

The *Wayfarer Boots* are stout boots of thick, hard leather with a robust trim of fur. These boots embody the tough brand of magic that orc wizards practice. Orc wizards might study spells instead of the double-axe, but their society requires them to be tougher than spellcasters of other races.

Movement: The boots increase the wearer's base movement rate by 10 feet as long as he wears nothing heavier than medium armor and does not carry a heavy load.

Archmage's Apparel Pieces Possessed	Wayfarer Boots Powers
1	+10 feet movement, +4 to Concentration checks
2	+10 feet movement, +8 to Concentration checks, +2 to Fortitude saves vs. magic
3	+10 feet movement, +12 to Concentration checks, +4 to Fortitude saves vs. magic, Spellcasting DR 5/-
4	+10 feet movement, +16 to Concentration checks, +6 to Fortitude saves vs. magic, Spellcasting DR 10/-
5	+10 feet movement, +20 to Concentration checks, +8 to Fortitude saves vs. magic, Spellcasting DR 15/-

Concentration: This is the competence bonus applied to any Concentration checks the wearer makes while wearing the boots.

Fortitude: This bonus applies only to resisting spells and magical effects. So while the bonus would be effective against *contagion,* the boots would not aid the wearer against poison (unless that poison was magical).

Spellcasting DR: On the action a spellcaster wearing these boots casts a spell, he is granted the listed damage reduction. This applies only for the action during which he casts a spell, but is very effective against ready actions waiting to disrupt spellcasting.

Archmage's Hat

The *Archmage's Hat* sports a fashion so stereotypical that almost none use it anymore. A tall cone of a hat, this blue felt cap is speckled with large golden stars. Despite its ridiculous appearance, however, the power within remains undeniable. Containing an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and a fierce passion to achieve, the *Archmage's Hat* embodies the human essence.

Intelligence: The *Archmage's Hat* adds this enhancement bonus to the wearer's Intelligence.

Skill Pool: The skill pool is a reflection of the amazing learning capacity of humanity. This is a pool of skill ranks that is based on the wearer's (enhanced) Intelligence modifier, and it refreshes every day. The wearer may assign these skill ranks to any skill as a free action, including cross-class skills, and use the modified skill rank for one skill check. The wearer must still pay the normal cross-class costs but must treat a skill as cross-class only if it fails to appear on any of his classes' skill lists. Skill pool points assigned can exceed the character's normal maximum ranks. Ranks disappear after one use.

Mental Might: By taking a full-round action to cast a spell, a wizard wearing this hat may apply the full might of his mind, applying 150% or 200% of his Intelligence modifier to the DC of a spell (instead of simply adding his Intelligence modifier). Note that a spellcaster that uses an attribute other than Intelligence to power his spells (such as a bard or sorcerer) wearing the *Archmage's Hat* gains no benefit from this power.

Archmage's Apparel Pieces Possessed	Archmage's Hat Powers
1	+2 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, skill pool (Int bonus x 2)
2	+2 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, mental might (150% Intelligence bonus to spell DC), skill pool (Int bonus x 4)
3	+4 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, mental might (150% Intelligence bonus to spell DC), skill pool (Int bonus x 6)
4	+4 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, mental might (200% Intelligence bonus to spell DC), skill pool (Int bonus x 8)
5	+6 enhancement bonus to Intelligence, mental might (200% Intelligence bonus to spell DC), skill pool (Int bonus x 10)

Angelfeather Cloak

None know if the *Angelfeather Cloak* is truly made of angel's feathers, but it certainly looks the part. A large, flowing garment woven entirely from thick white feathers, the cloak sprouts a pair of peaks near the shoulders, making it seem more like a pair of wings when worn open. Embodying the halfling love of travel and discovery, the cloak tries to impart some of that freedom to its wearer by letting her travel light.

Deflection Bonus: The bonus granted to armor class is a deflection bonus that increases with each item of *Archmage Apparel* worn.

Deep Pockets: The cloak has a pair of interior pockets sewn inside it. Each of these pockets functions as a *bag of holding* of the type noted in the chart above.

Quill: A wizard on the road has many things to worry about; finding a writing instrument should not be one of them. Anyone wearing the cloak may pluck a feather from it and use it as a quill that supplies a never-ending supply of ink. This quill only functions for the person wearing the cloak. The cloak is able to provide a limitless supply of quills for this ability.

Spell Resistance: The cloak discovers within its wearer the power to resist hostile magic, granting him spell resistance based on his Intelligence modifier.

Material Substitution: To ease the hassle of managing spell components, the wearer of the cloak can transform a plucked feather into the material components for any spell being cast, as long as the components cost no more than 1 gp. This ability only works for the person wearing the cloak; he can-

Archmage's Apparel Pieces Possessed	Angelfeather Cloak Powers
1	+2 defection bonus to AC, deep pockets (type I), quill
2	+4 defection bonus to AC, deep pockets (type II) quill, SR (Int modifier x 3)
3	+6 defection bonus to AC, deep pockets (type III), quill, spell resistance (Int modifier x 3), material substitution
4	+8 defection bonus to AC, deep pockets (type IV), quill, spell resistance (Int modifier x 4), material substitution
5	+10 defection bonus to AC, deep pockets (type IV), quill, spell resistance (Int modifier x 5), material substitution, greater substitution

not provide components to other spellcasters. The cloak is able to provide a limitless supply of quills for this ability.

Greater Substitution: The cloak can now provide material components for any spell, regardless of the cost. However, rarer and more valuable components are more difficult to produce, and take a toll on the wizard summoning them. For every 10 gp worth of components summoned, or fraction thereof, the caster suffers 1 point of nonlethal damage. Because the cloak's feather transforms into the needed component only in the midst of casting, valuable materials cannot be summoned and then sold or used for any purpose other than as a spell's material component. If the wizard does not complete the spell for whatever reason, the materials revert to feathers, but the nonlethal damage caused by the cloak's use remains. The cloak is able to provide a limitless supply of quills for this ability.

Archmage's Apparel Pieces Possessed	Staff of Disruption Powers
1	Lingering distractions -2
2	Lingering distractions -2, scramble magic (Spell level x 2)
3	Lingering distractions -4, scramble magic (Spell level x 2)
4	Lingering distractions -4, scramble magic (Spell level x 5)
5	Lingering distractions -6, scramble magic (Spell level x 5)

Ring of Flares

The *Ring of Flares* is an intricately crafted band of interwoven ruby and gold, all arranged in overlapping starburst patterns. Its craftsmanship is peerless, and the magically skilled can sense its interlocking magical matrixes crafted with equal amounts of skill. The intricacy of both the ring's physical makeup and it's enchantments embody the dwarven love of fine craftsmanship and their unique way of approaching magic like metal—as something to be shaped.

Spell Storing: The *Ring of Flares* can store spells just as a *ring of spell storing*, holding 10 levels worth of spells per item of the apparel collected.

Spell Crafting: In addition to storing spells, the ring can also hold the tools of magical manipulation: metamagic feats. A wizard may store any metamagic feat he knows in the ring. Each feat takes up a number of spell slots equal to three times its level adjustment, but thereafter applies to every spell stored within the ring, without adjusting the spell level.

Feats stored in this manner can be removed from the ring and replaced with a spell or another feat at any time. When the wearer loses apparel and thus loses levels of stored spells, he may choose which spells or feats are lost until the ring stores an appropriate amount of levels.

Staff of Disruption

Six slightly twisted feet of oak topped with a golden band and a small, clear crystal, the *Staff of Disruption* stands out only in how typical it appears. This staff's appearance is deceiving, however, as would only be appropriate for an artifact forged by gnomes.

Lingering Distractions: Any time the staff's wielder casts a spell with the target entry, the wielder can force the target to make an additional Will save with the same DC as the spell cast. For spells that do not normally allow saves, calculate the DC according to the level of spell cast. Failing this save fills the target's mind with a continual stream of phantom images and sounds, almost as if he were daydreaming. This disrupts concentration and erodes the will, imposing the noted penalty against all Concentration checks and Will saves. Additionally, affected spellcasters must make a Concentration check (DC of 15 + spell level) each time they cast a spell or lose the spell. The penalty lasts a number of rounds equal to the wielder's Intelligence bonus (minimum 1 round). This is a mind-affecting phantasm effect. This power has no effect on creatures that successfully resist the spell using spell resistance. Those who succeed in a standard saving throw against the original spell still must succeed in the Will save against this effect to resist, however.

Scramble Magic: In addition to lacing the wielder's spells with illusory side effects, the *Staff of Disruption* can transform spell energy into sheer distraction. The wielder must place a spell into the staff. This can be any spell the wielder can cast, but it must be cast by the wielder, not a scroll or surrogate caster. The staff can hold one spell of any level per item of the apparel collected.

Once so charged, the wielder need only make a touch attack with the staff against an opponent to loose the energy within. On a successful strike, the staff discharges the transformed magic and attempts to scramble the target's natural resistances, lowering its spell resistance or elemental resistance by 2 or 5 points per level of spell stored within the staff. These effects last for one day, but the target creature can resist with a Will save. The DC of this save is as if saving against a spell of the same level that powers the staff's attack. Spell resistance does not apply to this attack.

Archmage's Apparel Pieces Possessed	Ring of Flares Powers
1	Spell storing (10 levels), spell crafting
2	Spell storing (20 levels), spell crafting
3	Spell storing (30 levels), spell crafting
4	Spell storing (40 levels), spell crafting
5	Spell storing (50 levels), spell crafting

If the target has multiple resistances, the wielder chooses which one he wishes to reduce. He can only target a single resistance per strike; the reduction cannot be split. Immunity is too strong be overcome by this power.

Sorcerer's Regalia Pieces Possessed	Scales of Ice Powers
1	Extra spell slots (Charisma bonus x 2)
2	Extra spell slots (Charisma bonus x 3)
3	Extra spell slots (Charisma bonus x 4), protection from chaos

SORCERER'S REGALIA

Wizards are known for their props. Few can picture a wizard without a staff, magical robe, and crystal ball. For a wizard, this only makes sense; their study of spellbooks and magical theory leads them to study other magical devices as well.

Yet sorcerers are different. Their magic is in the blood, not the book. Sorcerers understand their magic by living it, not studying it. And the artifacts of power dedicated to their brand of magic reflect this more instinctual bent. The *Sorcerer's Regalia* is not a wardrobe of forged and woven magical paraphernalia, but the raw essence of magic given form and substance. The three items in this set are not the product of understanding magic, they are magic.

Flame of Chaos

The *Flame of Chaos* is an ever-burning puff of sheer radiance. No larger than the size of a man's hand, this brilliant flame dances too frenetically for normal fire and blasts through all the colors of the spectrum with unbound intensity.

When found, it typically rests in a brazier of some kind, but reports never agree on what this container looks like. Some claim it is a stout iron censor with thick chains; others say it burns within a lantern.

The *Flame of Chaos* is the embodiment of magical power, a small portion of the energy that fuels arcane magic, condensed and contained.

Random Metamagic: To use the flame, a sorcerer must wield it in hand and take a full-round action to cast a spell. The flame adds different metamagic feats at random to a spell depending on how many items of the regalia the caster possesses. Metamagic feats granted by the *Flame of Chaos* that cannot be applied to the spell being cast have no effect on the spell. If this means that the use of the *Flame* has no effect on the spell at all, the Flame is still considered used for the day.

Without the *Necklace of Balance*, a caster can only use either the *Flame of Chaos* or the *Scales of Ice* on any given day: Once one item is used, the other will not function for that sorcerer until the following day. Each item still benefits from the other's presence for purposes of determining power level however.

Protection from Law: When a sorcerer bears all three artifacts of the *Sorcerer's Regalia*, the sorcerer gains a permanent *protection from law* effect as per the spell cast by a 20th-level caster.

Scales of Ice

The *Scales of Ice* appear to be an ice sculpture of a small balance. However, it is no mere sculpture; the deposit is a fully functioning scale. Its trays swing on perfectly flexible ice chains, and its arms tip with the slightest weight. Ice slides along ice without friction.

Until it is first used, and thus attuned to a new wielder, the *Scales of Ice* radiate a bitter, biting cold. They are uncomfortable to be near, and nearly unbearable to hold. However, once its magic joins with that of a wielder, its iciness subsides and becomes soothingly cool.

Extra Spell Slots: To use the scales, a sorcerer must wield it in hand and take a full-round action to cast a spell. The scales carefully measure the amount of magical energy used while casting a spell, determining the absolute minimum needed to power the effect and preventing any magical waste. This increases the efficiency of the caster's spells, effectively granting him extra spell slots.

When used, the scales grant an additional number of spell slots. The sorcerer's Charisma modifier determines the number of extra slots. These extra spell slots are available only while casting with the scales in hand. Spell slots can be combined to cast higher level spells (if the sorcerer knows and can cast them). For instance, a sorcerer with 10 extra slots and access to 5th-level spells could cast a 5th-level spell, a 3rd-level spell, and two 1st-level spells (0-level spells count as half a slot). The number of extra slots is renewed each day, and once a sorcerer has used the scales in a day, the scales fail to function for any other sorcerer that might try to use them until the next day.

Without the *Necklace of Balance*, a caster can only use either the *Flame of Chaos* or the *Scales of Ice* on any given day. Once one item is used, the other will not function for that wielder until the following day. Each item still

Sorcerer's Regalia Pieces Possessed	Flame of Chaos Powers
1	Random metamagic (roll 1d4: 1–Enlarge Spell, 2–Extend Spell, 3– Silent Spell, 4–Still Spell)
2	Random metamagic (roll 1d4: 1–Empower Spell, 2–Heighten Spell [2 levels], 3–Extend Spell and Enlarge Spell, 4–Silent Spell and Still Spell)
3	Random metamagic (roll 1d4: 1–Maximize Spell, 2–Heighten Spell [3 levels], 3–Empower Spell and Enlarge Spell, 4–Silent Spell, Still Spell, and Extend Spell), protection from law

benefits from the other's presence for purposes of determining power level.

Protection from Chaos: When a sorcerer bears all three artifacts of the sorcerer's regalia, the sorcerer gains a permanent *protection from chaos* effect as per the spell cast by a 20th-level caster.

Necklace of Balance

Between blinding light and bitter cold sits the *Necklace of Balance,* an innocuous disk hanging from a simple cord. Its appearance changes from viewer to viewer, and sometimes even viewing to viewing. Some see a yin yang symbol, certain documented accounts describe an intricately carved serpentine dragon, and others claim it is nothing more than a flat gray disk. Its subjective nature makes study difficult, if not impossible, and the sorcerers who obtain it often care more about how to use it than the philosophical nature of its physical structure. Perhaps the most noticeable power the necklace imparts is the ability to use both the *Flame of Chaos* and the *Scales of Ice* simultaneously, benefiting from increased spell efficiency and wild bursts of power. However, the necklace has a few abilities of its own.

Balance: True to its name, the *Necklace of Balance* provides a competence bonus to all Balance checks. This bonus increases with more items of the *Sorcerer's Regalia.*

Will Bonus: In addition to granting physical stability, the necklace grants a balanced mind as well, granting a bonus of +2, +4, or +6 to all Will saves depending on how many items of the regalia the wearer possesses.

Balance Ice and Flame: When a sorcerer possesses all three items of the *Sorcerer's Regalia* and wears the necklace, she can use both the *Scales of Ice* and *Flame of Chaos* each once per day.

Sorcerer's Regalia Pieces Possessed	Necklace of Balance Powers
1	Balance (+4 competence bonus), +2 bonus to Will saves
2	Balance (+8 competence bonus), +4 bonus to Will saves
3	Balance (+12 competence bonus), +6 bonus to Will saves, balance ice and flame

Bardic Ensemble Pieces Possessed	Harmonic Chain Powers
1	Magic armor, dénouement
2	Magic armor, dénouement, terrifying clatter
3	Magic armor, dénouement, terrifying clatter, spell interruption

BARDIC ENSEMBLE

When one thinks of mighty magic, few think of the bard, and this is for good reason. Not only do bards lack the depth of magical knowledge and power of the more focused wizard or sorcerer but also the power they do wield is often subtler in nature. Rather than throwing a tempest of fire into the midst of the charging enemy, the bard is more likely to sing out about heroes of old and lend strength to all who hear his voice. Although no less effective, bardic power is more often the conveyance of great deeds, rather than the subject.

It is for this reason that the *Bardic Ensemble* is less widely known than other collections of artifacts. Those that bore these items in the past did more to propagate the tales of others than build their own names. Still, the abilities of bards who possessed all three portions of the ensemble were often too great to be ignored or overlooked, and these items have written their way into history without the aid of someone to sing their praises.

Harmonic Chain

As befitting an item of bards, the *Harmonic Chain* is as much a piece of art as it is useful equipment. A masterfully crafted suit of chainmail, the *Harmonic Chain* is laced through with groupings of chimes. The links of the armor drip with them, and even the motion of breathing causes them to tap against one another in an ethereal tinkling of bells.

Magic Armor: The *Harmonic Chain* is a *+4 chain shirt* that imposes a -6 circumstance penalty to all Move Silently checks.

Dénouement: Instead of ending a song and letting its dramatic echo continue to reverberate in the minds of others for a time, the bard can let the ringing of his armor continue the melody, letting it fade out gradually, and extending the effects of his music. With this power, the effects of a bard's bardic music last an additional 3 rounds after the bard stops singing.

Terrifying Clatter: The chimes clang together frightfully when the bard is struck by an enemy, striking grating chords that reverberate in the backs of the eyes and inside teeth. Anytime the bard is hit by a melee or ranged weapon while flat-footed, fighting defensively, using the Combat Expertise feat, or using the total defense action it causes such a din that all foes within 30 feet must succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + the wearer's bard class level + Charisma modifier) or suffer a -3 morale penalty to all attack and damage rolls until the end of the combat. This is a sonic, mind-affecting attack.

Spell Interruption: Whenever the bard uses his countersong ability, the chimes in the armor add a powerful harmony that disrupts all spellcasters within 30 feet. While friendly targets may still replace their saving throws with the bard's Perform check, hostile spellcasters attempting to cast a spell must make a Concentration check that exceeds the bard's Perform check or lose the spell.

Bardic Ensemble Pieces Possessed	Harmonic Chain Powers
1	Accumulated lore
2	Accumulated lore, creative combat (2 feats)
3	Accumulated lore, creative combat (5 feats)

Necklace of Muses

This necklace is a large and elaborate piece of jewelry. Its fine chain links are each intricately carved with stories portrayed in pictograph, and many of the charms that hang from it are hollow and filled with small scrolls of stories and songs. Perhaps the most valued thing the necklace holds is inspiration. In addition to gut-bursting comedies, heart-rending tragedies, and the most inspiring of epics, the necklace is rumored to hold the essence of story crafting itself, and bards who have worn it swear that the fire of creation burns more fiercely and more often when the necklace hangs from their necks.

Accumulated Lore: Legends say that each bard who has worn the *Necklace of Muses* compiled his greatest works and placed them within a new charm on the necklace. Thus, the necklace holds generations of masterpieces on countless subjects. This grants the bard a +10 competence bonus on all bardic knowledge checks.

Creative Combat: One of the marks of a great entertainer is the ability to read an audience and cater the show to those attending. With the *Necklace of Muses,* a bard may apply this skill to the battlefield. When using the inspire greatness bardic ability, the bard may elect to grant the target phantom feats. These feats can be any that the bard wishes and the target qualifies for.

Aiffe's Mandolin

Aiffe liked to call herself a bladesinger. Traditionalist elves scoffed at her, for she never studied wizardry, but it was a claim she maintained throughout the many centuries of her life. The elven woman was a bard who melded the passion of her music with that of the fight. Her sword technique blended perfectly with her music, with strikes coming harder on crescendos, and parries light and airy on giddy refrains. She could not fight silently, for every move she made was fuelled by music-stoked passion.

Some found her irreverent, others enchanting. One of the latter crafted for her the mandolin that bears her name today. Accounts vary on whether this wizard also created the other items of the *Bardic Ensemble,* but the story of Aiffe and her mandolin continue to drift through the generations unchallenged.

Dancing: When using any bardic music ability that has a duration limited by the length of the music itself, *Aiffe's Mandolin* may continue playing while the bard takes other actions. While playing itself, the mandolin hovers beside the bard; it cannot be left behind. In order to set the mandolin to dancing, the bard must first play it for 3 rounds. After that, he may set it lose as a free action, and it continues to play for 3 rounds plus the bard's Charisma modifier. With two items of the ensemble, the bard need play the mandolin for only 2 rounds before it dances, and it remains animated for 4 rounds plus the bard's Charisma modifier. With all three collected, the mandolin dances after a single round of play and remain animated for 5 rounds plus the bard's Charisma modifier. This combines with the dénouement ability of the *Harmonic Chain* so that after the dancing mandolin stops playing, the effects of the bard's bardic music ability continue for another 3 rounds.

Heartstrings: *Aiffe's Mandolin* can inspire comrades in much the same way she was inspired by the music she performed in battle. By expending one of his bardic music performances, the bard may grant all allies within a 30-foot radius who can hear him a variable bonus that lasts for as long as the bard performs.

This bonus is a pool of points equal to the bard's Charisma bonus multiplied by the number of items of the ensemble he wields (one, two, or three). These points may be allocated as a single moral bonus or several morale bonuses to be added to any allies' attack rolls, damage rolls, AC, or any kind of saving throws. The bonus can be split and distributed across any of these areas in any combination, and may be shifted from round to round.

Bardic Ensemble Pieces Possessed	Aiffe's Mandolin Powers
1	Dancing (3 rounds + Charisma bonus), heartstrings (Charisma)
2	Dancing (4 rounds + Charisma bonus), heartstrings (Charisma x 2)
3	Dancing (5 rounds + Charisma bonus), heartstrings (Charisma x 3)

Dungeoncraft

A SAMPLE DUNGEON
RELIQUARY OF KORTHUN

by Monte Cook · cartography by Christopher West

In this installment of "Dungeoncraft," I've created a dungeon using some of the principles set forth in previous installments. The dungeon is fully usable as an adventure for four PCs of 7th- or 8th-level PCs, but it is mostly for use as a showcase for some of the various ideas discussed in the four previous installments of "Dungeoncraft." Replace the dark creepers with wererats if you do not have a copy of the *Fiend Folio*.

THE RELIQUARY OF KORTHUN

Long ago, worshipers of the god of life and longevity, Korthun, built a temple in the wilderness. Beneath it, they constructed a reliquary to house the sacred relics of Korthun. Eventually, the worship of Korthun waned, and bandits came to the temple and killed the remaining priests and faithful. The bandits, being a superstitious lot, were afraid to go down into the reliquary. They started rumors of terrible curses and monsters beneath the abandoned temple in order to cover their cowardice.

Some years later, a small band of dark creepers (see the *Fiend Folio*) settled in the area beneath the temple, using it as a lair from which to come up at night and skulk about on the surface to find food and valuables to steal. The dark creepers have explored the reliquary thoroughly and know not to disturb the golems in area F (so they've never been to the crypt). They've explored the caves but never managed to open the door into the greater reliquary. Its treasures still await those who can reach them!

DEVELOPMENT AND PURPOSE OF THE DUNGEON

This dungeon was created with its purpose in mind. PCs coming here can simply be interested in exploration, or they can be there for some specific reason—to get to the hidden, unplundered reliquary that they heard about from a sage or in a book.

A. Entrance

Like most of the underground complex, the ceiling here is about 10 feet high. The walls and floor are dry. The room appears unremarkable except for the door, a few sconces for torches, and a copper plate. The plate is about 5 inches square and is affixed to the north wall. It bears the symbol of Korthun (a rose in a circle). The plate radiates a faint aura of transmutation magic.

The room is also a "key room" as mentioned in issue #310. If the copper key in area D is placed against this plate, it magically unlocks the door into area I. It also opens the door into area G, releasing the undead. If the copper key in area D and the copper key in area E both touch the plate at the same time, only the door into area I opens.

B. Priest's Preparation Area

This room was where the priests would anoint themselves with holy water and don sanctified robes. A few tattered, dirty, and musty white robes still lie on the ground. A tipped-over basin in this room once held holy water. This room also has sconces for torches (*this is important to note, so that if PCs wonder how the original inhabitants saw their way around down here in the darkness, the DM has an answer*).

The western end of the room is a balcony overlooking the great hall (area E). Here the priests could meditate on their god while gazing down upon his images.

This is an example of a room with a logical purpose in the context of the dungeon as a whole, but no real special features of interest to dungeon explorers. It adds a sense of reality, if not excitement.

As the DM, you can stress the grand view that greets the PCs as they make their way through a couple of dingy dungeon rooms to see the faded glory of the great hall.

C. Guard Room

The Korthun guards are long gone, but the dark creepers use this room. An old wooden table and some other furniture, used by the original guards, fill the room. Six dark creepers usually live here as well, although there is a 50% chance that 1d2 of them are in area E. If the

PCs come here at night, half of the dark creepers are gone foraging above ground.

It is important to note that the southern 10 feet of area C extends over the top of area D, and the trap door leads down into that area.

The creepers are cautious creatures, and if they hear intruders moving around, they take action. If the intruders come right into this room, the creepers prepare an ambush and make sneak attacks from the shadows, but if overmatched, they do not hesitate to flee through the trap door and down the ladder into area D (after which they pull down the ladder). If the intruders pass by this room and go down into area E, five of the creepers move to area B where they can watch the intruders from the balcony and attack with ranged weapons. One moves into area D to warn the others.

There is little of value in the room other than the personal treasure on the creepers, which can be determined randomly if needed.

This room provides an example of a dynamic feature in a dungeon, as mentioned in issue #311.

D. Lesser Reliquary

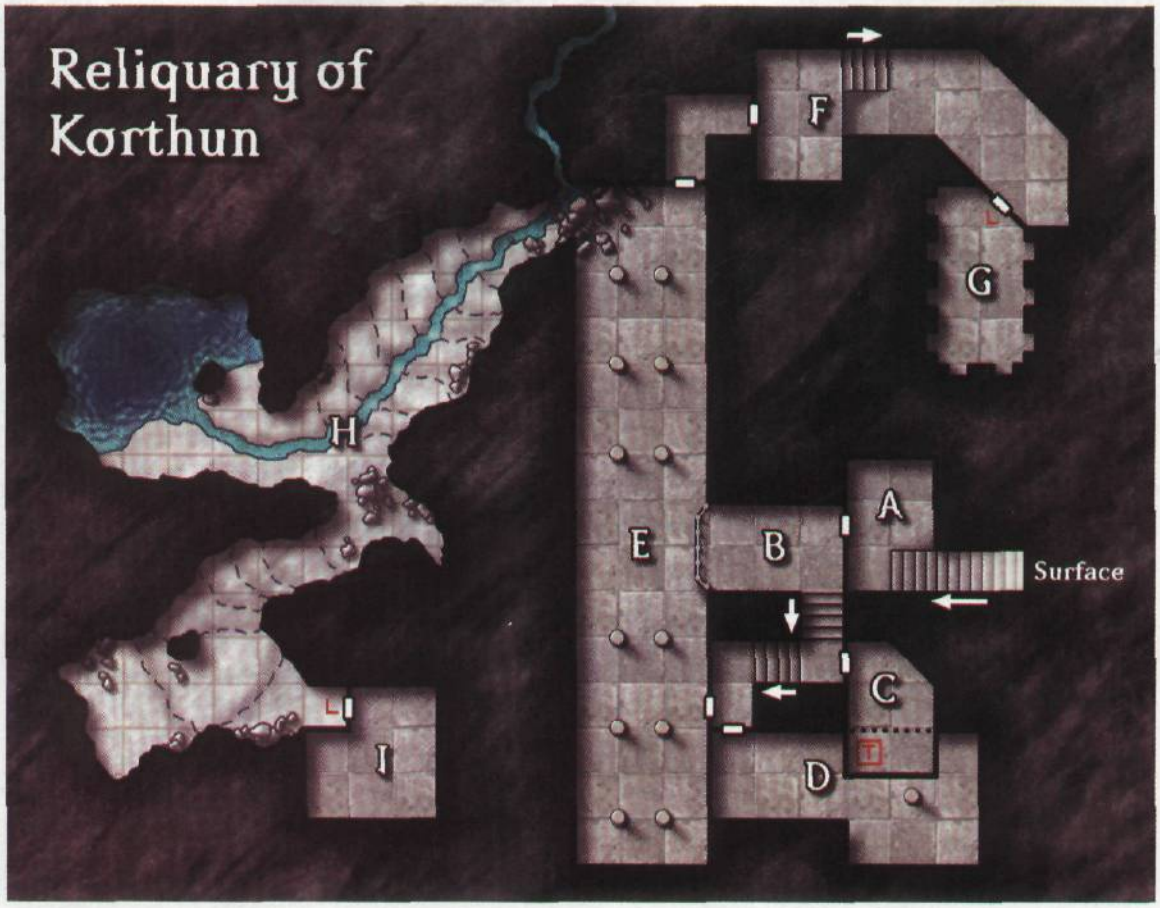
Long since plundered by the dark creepers, this room now serves as their main lair. Ten dark creepers live in this room, although there is a 50% chance that 1d4 of them are in area E. A dark stalker, their leader, also dwells here. If the PCs come here at night, half of the dark creepers are gone foraging above ground.

The creepers defend this room as best they can, fleeing up the ladder to area C or running out to area E if they are hard-pressed.

The creepers have spread out their rag-beds and generally made a mess of the place, but the walls bear nice cupboardlike storage areas marked with holy symbols and inscriptions like "the hilt of the sword broken by Korthun when he stopped the War of the Three Rivers." No relics are here anymore, however.

Amid the dark creepers' belongings, many of which have no discernable purpose and none of which are valuable, the PCs find a copper key in the shape of the symbol of Korthun. This is worth 10 gp and radiates a faint aura of transmutation magic. It has a purpose in area A.

This room is interesting because the PCs should be able to recognize two different uses for the room:



the current one, as a lair of the creepers, and the older, "background" use, that of a storage room for relics.

E. Great Hall

The ceiling here is 20 feet high and vaulted. The ceiling, walls, and pillars are covered in paintings of Korthun and his worshipers in scenes right out of the myths about the god and the religion. The paint, however, is faded, chipped, and in many places covered in fungus from the dampness. Note that in this large hall, the high ceiling is supported by pillars. Without this kind of realistic support, the hall would almost certainly collapse.

The north end of the hall is filled with damp rubble. Characters pausing to listen here can hear the sounds of moving water (DC 15 Listen check). If the PCs search through the rubble (DC 15 Search check) they find the entrance to the caves (area H).

The creepers use this area for recreation, playing strange, rough games with each other. Some of the creepers from areas C and D might be here. If so, they romp in the dark toward the north end of the hall. If they hear intruders coming, they hide and prepare an ambush.

Another copper key, just like the one in area D, is lost amid some rocks and dust in the southern end of the room.

F. Crypt Entrance

The eastern portion of the room is 10 feet lower than the western portion, although old stone steps connect the two levels. The Korthunites created two flesh golems and placed them to guard the crypt, attacking anything that comes in. Two long-dead creepers can be found near the door.

Note that we have yet another change in elevation here, as well as a ledge that might figure prominently in a fight. In fact, you can design the encounter so that the golems use tactics, with one atop the ledge and the other at the bottom. The one at the top knocks foes off and the one at the bottom attacks them after they land (and are prone).

G. Crypt

This is where the Korthunites buried their honored dead. Intruders can find a total of eighteen niches (each niche on the map represents two, and one is above the other on the wall), filled with bones and grave goods.

The door into this room is locked. When you put locked doors in a dungeon, you may want to note the fact right on the map so you don't forget. Someone can pick the lock (DC 20 Open Lock check), although actions in area A may open the door automatically.

If the door opens, magic in the room causes six wights to rise from the niches to attack every living thing they encounter (they ignore the golems, and the golems ignore them). They spend the first 15 minutes in area G and F, and after that begin to roam the dungeon.

The crypts contain a number of grave goods, including jewelry, some coins, an idol of Korthun, and a few valuable urns, with a total value of 2,000 gp.

H. Limestone Caves

These caves are natural, encountered by the Korthunites when they were building the Reliquary. (The caves are truly three-dimensional, extending down as much as they do south and west.) The cave floors are a mass of flowstone descending on either side of the underground stream that runs into the pool in the west. The stream flows through a crack in the northeast corner of the caves, where the Korthunites accidentally broke through into the cavern while building the Reliquary. They attempted to hide this entrance into the caves, but the water ruined the secret door and collapsed the end of the Great Hall a bit, so now the caves are hidden only by rubble.

Each dashed line represents about a 3 to 5 foot change in height, with the caves generally getting lower as one goes from the northeast to the southwest. These changes represent both a sharp incline of flowstone as well as occasionally steep, stair-like ledges. The caves are damp and filled with loose stones, and are therefore treacherous to move in.

The western cave contains a pool. The water is very clear, cold, and deep. The water slowly runs out of the cave and into deeper caves not depicted on the map. Forty feet down, at the bottom of the pool, the skeleton of a Korthun priest rests, still wearing a *+1 breastplate.* This hidden secret is likely to go unnoticed by most, but rewards those thoughtful and ingenious enough to reach it.

The DM might wish to provide a clue that the greater reliquary lies beyond the caves. An interesting way to do this is to put another flesh golem in the central portion of the cave, covered in rubble. The golem accidentally triggered a cave-in long ago and is now trapped under heavy stones. If the PCs leave it alone, it presents no danger; if they free it, it attacks. Its existence, however, suggests that there is something to guard further in, particularly if they encounter the guarding golems in area F.

I. Greater Reliquary

This stone door is magically sealed and can only be opened in area A. Inside are the unplundered treasures of Korthun: jewelry, a scepter, and a jeweled mace worth a total of 6,000 gp as well as a *pearl of power* (3rd-level spell). The relics rest atop a pedestal inside a locked ivory and wood chest (DC 30 Open Lock check). The chest is worth 200 gp.

The Korthunites hid the Reliquary here after discovering the caves. Although there are no secret doors involved, the chamber is well hidden, for who would expect it within these natural caves?

The Play's the Thing

YOU ARE WHAT YOU CAST
SPELLCASTER QUIRKS

by Michael Mearls

The kinds of spells a spellcaster likes to use say a lot about her personality. Some wizards prefer to blast their problems to smithereens with flashy spells, such as *ice storm* and *acid fog*. An aggressive sorcerer who is known to act first and think later might always have *fireball* ready to fly. Others like to use more finesse, perhaps turning their enemies into their best friends with *charm person*, *dominate monster*, or similar spells. A cleric of a trickster deity might use *hold person* to prevent a shopkeeper from interfering, while casually stealing items from the shop.

This article presents a list of personality archetypes and describes how they can influence a character's spell selection. Each archetype includes lists of appropriate spells for the three major spellcasting classes: cleric, druid, and sorcerer/wizard. Each spell level has two or more different incantations listed, allowing you to quickly fill out a caster's repertoire of magic. Note that none of the summaries include 0-level spells, since those lists are too limited to cover all the personality types.

As a player, you can use these lists to inspire you to flesh out your character's background and personality tendencies. Find an archetype that includes your favorite spells to kick start your imagination. Then use it to build a foundation for your character's personality.

For DMs, picking out an NPC's spells can be a chore. Especially when you must come up with a caster on short notice. Start with an NPC's personality. If you know that Alzabar the Grand is an arrogant, vain sorcerer, you need only find a personality profile (such as the spellmaster) that fits your vision of the character and select from the spells listed there.

THE BLASTER

Typically, the blaster employs flashy magic to impress others with her skill and cow her enemies into submission. If a spell is loud, visually stunning, and does a lot of damage, the blaster knows how to cast it. Like an elemental force of destruction, the blaster sees herself as a conduit of energy that can be focused and applied to defeat a wide range of obstacles. An enclosing wall, a mob of ogres, or a threatening constable can all be blown apart with a thunderous display of magical firepower. To the blaster, the more power she can command, the happier she is. A spell with eye-catching effects and a wide blast radius is much more desirable than one that uses subtler methods. She draws a direct connection between the effects a caster can produce and her skill in casting.

At her best, the blaster is an eager, confident ally. No matter what the situation, she's ready to throw her most powerful spells into the fray. She might not emerge victorious, but even her enemies will speak of her deeds years in the future. A bit of a showboat and thrill seeker, she is daring, eager, and ready to stand against her enemies to the end. While she might care what others think about her, she measures her worth in bravery and daring, as well as skill.

At her worst, the blaster is emotional, angry, and prone to apply too much force to simple problems. She can be a bully, using the threat of her magic to cow others and get her way. She has trouble moderating her response to a threat, usually starting with her most powerful spells then working her way down before taking time to assess what the best plan might have been. Looking powerful is almost as good as being powerful in her eyes.

Cleric Spells: *Cause fear, magic stone; shatter, sound burst; contagion, searing light; divine power, inflict critical wounds; flame strike, righteous might; blade barrier, harm; destruction, repulsion; earthquake, fire storm; implosion, storm of vengeance.*

Druid Spells: *Faerie fire, shillelagh; flame blade, flaming sphere; call lightning, sleet storm; blight, flame strike, ice storm; call lightning storm, wall of fire; fire seeds, wall of stone; creeping doom, fire storm; earthquake, finger of death, whirlwind; elemental swarm, storm of vengeance.*

Borders Illustrated by David Wahlstrom

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells: *Burning hands, magic missile; shatter, web; fireball, lightning bolt; Evard's black tentacles, shout; cloudkill, cone of cold; acid fog, disintegrate; Bigby's grasping hand, delayed blast fireball, prismatic spray; incendiary cloud, polar ray, power word stun, sunburst; meteor swarm, power word kill.*

THE DIRECTOR

The director is a leader, a spellcaster who uses his magic to improve other's abilities so that they can better serve his needs. This isn't to say he manipulates or uses others. Rather, the director sees his magic as a tool to enhance and amplify his and his allies' talents in the name of teamwork. A spell that can engulf a monster in flames might be useful for a moment or two, but one that strengthens a warrior, or protects him from harm for several hours, is much more efficient. The director's magic might not be as flashy, but it offers more utility in a wider range of situations. He prefers spells such as *bull's strength* and *haste* that grant their recipients nearly superhuman abilities. Since the director needs allies around him who can take advantage of his favorite spells, he learns to organize and command others. He sees himself as a field commander, someone who keeps a step away from a battle to better lend advice and tactical assistance to his friends.

At his best, the director is a cunning tactician who, through his advice and insights, can help his allies make the most of their talents. He teaches others out of a sense of duty, and he takes great pride in watching others improve their skills under his tutelage. The director feels most comfortable out of the spotlight. He would rather sit in a dark corner in an inn and keep an eye on things than join his friends at the bar. Although the director feels he has good ideas, he sees his friends as equal partners and realizes that the best advice in the world might go unheeded if he forces it upon them.

At his worst, the director is an egotist who cannot resist his impulse to bully and command others. He leads because he fancies himself the smartest person in the group. Everyone else is a childish fool who, without his guidance, would have little chance of success. He craves the spotlight, leaping at any chance to demonstrate his talents. He is eager to ensure that he earns his proper share of the credit, which in his eyes means all of it.

Cleric Spells: *Bless, remove fear; bull's strength, shield other, status; magic circle against chaos/evil/good/law, prayer; greater magic weapon, imbue with spell ability; disrupting weapon, mass cure light wounds, spell resistance; animate objects, heroes' feast; ethereal jaunt, regenerate, greater restoration, summon monster VII; antimagic field, mass cure critical wounds; astral projection, gate.*

Druid Spells: *Cure light wounds, endure elements, goodberry; barkskin, resist energy; neutralize poison, water breathing; dispel magic, freedom of movement; cure critical wounds, death ward; liveoak, mass cure light wounds; heal, wind walk; animal shapes, control plants; foresight, mass cure critical wounds.*

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells: *Enlarge person, mage armor; bull's strength, bear's endurance, daze monster; fly, haste; mass enlarge person, solid fog, stoneskin; Rary's telepathic bond, seeming; greater heroism, true seeing; greater teleport, mass invisibility; prismatic wall, protection from spells; astral projection, etherealness, foresight.*

THE PROTECTOR

This spellcaster uses her magic to protect her friends and allies. She doesn't consider herself a soldier, but a warden. Rather than directly confront an enemy, she prefers to use her magic to discourage a foe or force him to flee. The protector may see herself as a defender of the little guy, or as a bulwark against encroaching forces. Standing between her friends and danger, the protector defines victory not as overcoming her opponents but as preserving her friends. She does what she can to foil her enemies and push their conflict away from her home. The protector uses spells to aid others and turn them away from evil deeds. In her eyes, removing an opponent's ability to fight is better than simply killing him. A captive can be reasoned with or, failing that, lead the protector and her allies to whatever creature or force compelled the aggressor to attack.

At her best, she is an activist who has no qualms about storming into a royal court and demanding the king dispatch an army to help protect the frontier. While she is not aggressive in battle, in other situations she is ready and able to take any risk imaginable to succeed in her goals. The protector can be quiet, introverted, and withdrawn until a cause or person she wishes to keep safe is involved, at which point her outgoing, courageous, and energetic persona comes to the fore. The protector believes in saving her energy and emotion for important occasions.

At her worst, the protector is a fatalist. She wants to hold on to the most important things in life as long as possible. She sees defeat as inevitable, and her efforts only push back the day when she will finally fail. She may take unnecessary risks in battle, throwing herself in front of an opponent or drawing attention to herself with flashy spells. Protectors who have already lost much of what they would preserve often slide into deep depressions and act with the dark enthusiasm of one with nothing left to lose.

Cleric Spells: *Obscuring mist, sanctuary; calm emotions, shield other; magic vestment, protection from energy; death ward, freedom of movement; raise dead, wall of stone; antilife shell, find the path; control weather, resurrection, symbol of weakness; antimagic field, mass cure critical wounds; miracle, true resurrection.*

Druid Spells: *Calm animals, pass without trace; barkskin, delay poison; cure moderate wounds, quench, remove disease; antiplant shell, dispel magic, repel vermin; death ward, wall of thorns; repel wood, wall of stone; heal, wind walk; repel metal or stone, reverse gravity; foresight, mass cure critical wounds.*

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells: *Alarm, grease; blur, fog cloud; halt undead, wind wall; Leomund's secure shelter, remove curse; seeming, wall of stone; guards and wards, veil; greater teleport, mass invisibility, waves of exhaustion; prismatic wall, screen; etherealness, foresight, time stop.*

THE SPELLMASTER

To the spellmaster, magic is everything. When faced with a problem, his first impulse is to consider how magic can solve it. He focuses on spells that are flexible, the better to make the most of each one. He engages in study, keeps many old tomes of magic and religion in his quarters, and is fascinated by magical effects and creatures. Cleric and druid spellmasters rely exclusively on their spells, mostly foregoing the use of weapons and armor. A spellmaster is much like an artist who works in magic. He hones his skills and develops a deep appreciation for the learning and theory behind even the simplest spells. Spellmasters practice magic for the sake of magic. While they bend it to many useful ends, they also just enjoy learning new spells and researching novel approaches to their art. Spellmasters strive for flexibility in their use of magic.

At his best, the spellmaster uses his magic to aid his friends and solve problems in inventive ways. While proud of his talents, he recognizes that without the help of others he could never master them. He seeks situations where his magic proves useful. While he might not be strong and tough enough to stand at the forefront of a battle, he's right behind his friends ready to cast a spell that can turn the tide in their favor.

At his worst, the spellmaster is an arrogant, insufferable boor. He considers anyone incapable of using magic an unthinking brute. Normally, he associates only with others who practice magic. Anyone outside of his circle is a lesser being. Among his fellow spellcasters, he schemes and plots to prove himself better than others. Stealing spellbooks, ruining experiments, and other low tricks are all valid options in his eyes.

Cleric Spells: *Divine favor, shield of faith; enthrall, spiritual weapon; dispel magic, magic vestment; air walk, sending; insect plague, true seeing; greater dispel magic, mass cure moderate wounds; greater scrying, summon monster VII; fire storm, symbol of insanity; implosion, miracle.*

Druid Spells: *Entangle, hide from animals; chill metal, heat metal; dominate animal, spike growth; giant vermin, rusting grasp; animal growth, baleful polymorph, insect plague; repel wood, wall of stone; creeping doom, transmute metal to wood; control plants, earthquake, whirlwind; shambler, shapechange.*

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells: *Magic missile, shield; false life, mirror image, web; dispel magic, fireball; confusion, stoneskin; hold monster, major creation; contingency, legend lore; forcecage, reverse gravity; incendiary cloud, iron body; Bigby's crushing hand, energy drain.*

THE SEEKER

Knowledge is power, and the seeker endeavors to gather as much power as possible. While she recognizes that magic is a powerful tool, she also knows it must be directed toward a useful end. She uses her spells to learn as much as she can about the world around her. Some seekers are merely sages who focus on a single, esoteric area of knowledge. Adventuring seekers use their magic to uncover hidden threats, learn their enemies' tactics and plans, and prepare devastating attacks that play upon the foes' weaknesses. The seeker feels most comfortable when she has a clear idea of what lies ahead of her, relying on magic and mundane research to prepare for an adventure.

At her best, the seeker is a relentless investigator who can turn up information that others would miss. With her research in hand, she can prepare her friends to defeat an opponent, ensuring that the battle is over before it even begins. She is curious, inquisitive, and knowledgeable. At times her questions might grow tiring, but once she finds a hint of trouble she chases it down until she can expose it and render it harmless. She keeps her wits about her at all times.

At her worst, the seeker is a suspicious, paranoid inquisitor who sees enemies lurking behind every shadow. She has trouble discerning friend from foe, believing that even the most welcoming face can hide a terrible threat. She may have friends, but she quizzes them constantly to ensure she can trust them. While she demands loyalty, she doesn't hesitate to betray a friend she believes could be conspiring with her enemies. The seeker can be her own worst enemy, as her mind often conjures foes and conspiracies that do not exist. Worse, her paranoia and suspicion drive her to relentlessly pursue the imaginary enemies.

Cleric Spells: *Command, comprehend languages; hold person, zone of truth; daylight, invisibility purge; dimensional anchor, divination; commune, scrying; find the path, forbiddance; greater scrying, refuge, symbol of stunning; dimensional lock, discern location; astral projection, soul bind.*

Druid Spells: *Detect animals or plants, detect snares and pits, speak with animals; animal messenger, tree shape; meld into stone, speak with plants; command plants, scrying; commune with nature, tree*

nature, tree stride; find the path, stone tell; greater scrying, true seeing; animal shapes, control plants; antipathy, foresight.

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells: *Alarm, detect secret doors; detect thoughts, locate object; arcane sight, clairaudience/clairvoyance, gaseous form; lesser geas, scrying; prying eyes, teleport; mass suggestion, true seeing; greater scrying, spell turning, vision; discern location, mind blank; foresight, imprisonment.*

THE TRICKSTER

Magic is not always what it seems, a lesson the trickster takes to heart. The trickster is a master of misdirection. He fools his target into chasing phantoms and ignoring the real threat, usually the trickster and his companions. He demonstrates his ability by using spells in inventive ways. The trickster knows enough about people to understand that they can be their own worst enemies. By manipulating an opponent's desires and fears, he can force her into defeat or ruin. The trickster prefers spells that create objects, or spawn the seeming of an object. Illusion and conjuration spells are his favorites, and he employs them to create lures, terrifying sights, and fascinating displays, capitalizing on his knowledge of his target's nature and desires to manipulate his foes like puppets.

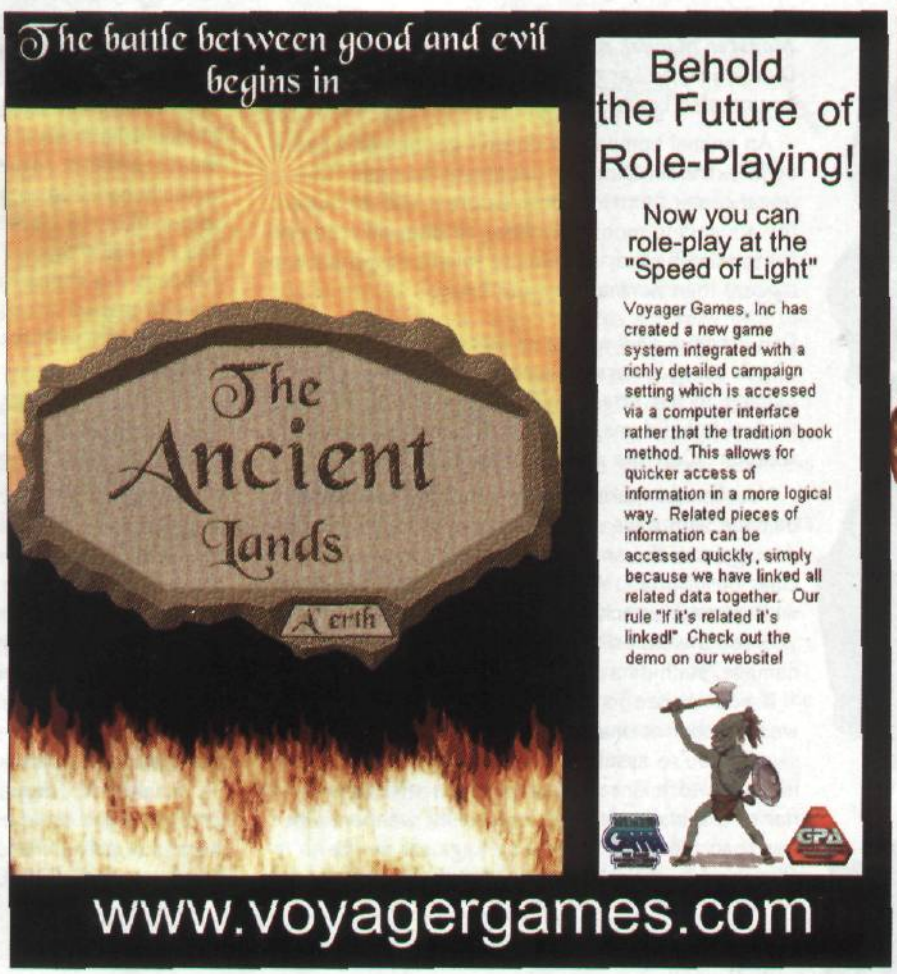
At his best the trickster is a wily, cunning ally who always has a plan for any situation. With a few illusions or a well-planned trap, he can eliminate obstacles or neutralize dangerous threats. By playing on his opponent's weaknesses, he can avoid a direct confrontation and conserve both his and his allies' resources. The trickster can turn rivals into unknowing allies by twisting their goals or luring them into mistaking the trickster's best interests for their own.

At his worst, the trickster is a conscienceless manipulator. He sees others as mere rubes waiting to be deceived. He exults in the power he feels when he can push someone to take a destructive course of action. Even in everyday interactions, the trickster cannot resist using his magic and knowledge of people to lead them along a path of his choosing. He might have friends, but he values others more for what they can do for him than for their courage, fidelity, or fellowship.

Cleric Spells: *Bane, entropic shield; eagle's splendor, hold person, silence; blindness/deafness, obscure object; control water, freedom of movement; greater command, true seeing; animate objects, wind walk; control weather, ethereal jaunt, repulsion; antimagic field, summon monster VIII; gate, miracle.*

Druid Spells: *Hide from animals, obscuring mist; animal trance, soften earth and stone; meld into stone, snare; freedom of movement, spike stones; transmute rock to mud, tree stride; find the path, transport via plants; true seeing, wind walk; control plants, word of recall; antipathy, shapechange.*

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells: *Disguise self, charm person; eagle's splendor, fox's cunning, invisibility, rope trick; displacement, major image; confusion, greater invisibility; feeblemind, passwall; mass suggestion, mislead, programmed image, shadow walk; ethereal jaunt, insanity, project image, limited wish; mass charm monster, maze; time stop, weird.* D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Sage Advice

COMBAT AND CASTING OFFICIAL ANSWERS

by Skip Williams

This month, the Sage looks into class features, feats, and spells. All page references are for the 3.5 core rulebooks. You can email the Sage with your questions at **sageadvice@paizo.com.**

When you add Hit Dice to a druid's (or ranger's) animal companion as the master's level goes up, does the animal get any bigger? For instance, when a druid has a wolf companion, the wolf starts out with the standard 2 Hit Dice and is Medium. By the time the druid is 3rd level, the wolf has 2 bonus Hit Dice. According to the wolf entry in the *Monster Manual*, an "advanced" wolf with 4 Hit Dice would be Large. Is the example animal companion also Large?

An animal companion doesn't get bigger when it adds extra Hit Dice for the master's levels. The advancement entries for creatures, and the rules for advancing monsters, refer to unusually powerful specimens that are simply tougher (and perhaps bigger) than normal for their kinds.

Can a rogue deal nonlethal damage with a sneak attack using a normal weapon if she takes a -4 penalty to her attack roll? What if the rogue tries to deal lethal damage with a normally nonlethal weapon? Can she make a sneak attack then?

You cannot make a sneak attack to deal nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage; see the sneak attack entry in the rogue class description. You can deal nonlethal damage with a sneak attack with an unarmed strike or if you use a weapon that normally deals nonlethal damage, such as a sap.

If you choose to deal nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage, such as a sword, you're assumed to wield the weapon in a less-than-efficient manner, such as striking with the flat of the blade or swinging a blunt weapon with less than the usual force (see page 146 in the *Player's Handbook*). Such methods prevent sneak attacks, which require especially well-aimed and effective blows.

You can make a sneak attack when you use a weapon that normally deals nonlethal damage to deal lethal damage. The penalty for doing so is -4, but in this case, it represents the difficulty you have finding and hitting a vulnerable area (also see page 146 in the *Player's Handbook*). This extra exactness in your attack doesn't interfere with sneak attacks.

One of my players, who has a rogue character, was reading the rogue class description and found an explanation of a rogue using a sap or unarmed strike in a sneak attack to deal nonlethal damage. He was wondering, since a sap is a martial weapon, should it have been listed as one of the martial weapons that a rogue is proficient with, or should it actually be listed as a simple weapon? Or, is it assumed in the class description that the rogue took the Martial Weapon Proficiency (sap) feat? What happens if a rogue isn't proficient with a sap and tries to make a sneak attack with it? Do you have to be proficient with the weapon you're using to make sneak attacks?

A sap is a martial weapon and proficiency with a sap is indeed a feature of the rogue class (as noted in the *Player's Handbook* errata file).

The sap is mentioned in the sneak attack description primarily to make it clear that you can make sneak attacks with nonlethal weapons (such as saps and unarmed strikes), even though you cannot make sneak attacks when you decide to deal nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage (see the previous question).

While a sneak attack requires deadly accuracy, you don't have to be proficient with a weapon to make a sneak attack with it. A rogue can suffer the -4 penalty for using a weapon with which she is not proficient and make a sneak attack. The situation here is slightly different than the one examined in the previous question. When you aren't proficient

Borders illustrated by David Wahlstrom

with a weapon, you have difficulty using it well, but you aren't deliberately using it in a less than optimal manner (as you are when trying to deal nonlethal damage with a lethal weapon). The two situations both impose a penalty of the same size, but for different reasons. Note that the two penalties stack. If you're aren't proficient with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage, and you try to deal nonlethal damage with it, you suffer a -8 penalty to attack rolls.

the subject should make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the nonlethal damage dealt). If the save fails, the subject is rendered unconscious. The subject immediately suffers enough nonlethal damage to make his current nonlethal damage total equal to his current hit points +10. For example, you perform a nonlethal coup de grace on a helpless gnoll that currently has 12 hit points. You hit the gnoll and deal 10 points of nonlethal damage, not enough to knock out the gnoll. The gnoll, however, must make a DC 20 Fortitude

I have a multiclass barbarian/rogue. I was wondering if he can sneak attack while raging?

Yes, provided the character's attack meets the requirements for a sneak attack—you must have the foe flanked or the foe must somehow be denied its Dexterity bonus (if any) to Armor Class against your attack. A sneak attack requires precision (see the two previous questions), but not much in the way of patience or concentration.

In the previous version of the D&D game, having levels in a prestige class never caused you to pay the experience penalty for being a multiclass character without uneven class levels (the prestige class levels didn't count when checking to see if you had a penalty). The section on prestige classes in the new *Dungeon Master's Guide* no longer mentions that you don't suffer an experience penalty for having levels in a prestige class. Is this a change or an error?

Having levels in a prestige class won't give you an experience penalty.

It's an error. Having levels in a prestige class won't give you an experience penalty.

What happens if you attempt a coup de grace with a weapon that deals nonlethal damage, such as a sap or a weapon with the merciful property? Is the coup de grace still automatically a critical hit? Is the target required to make a Fortitude save? If so, what's the DC, and what happens if the target fails? What happens if you use a normally lethal weapon to deal nonlethal damage as a coup de grace?

This question takes us beyond the rules. You could rule that you cannot deliver a coup de grace with nonlethal damage, but if you want rules for using nonlethal damage in such an attack, try these:

When you attempt a coup de grace with a weapon that deals nonlethal damage, you automatically hit and inflict a critical hit. Note that you cannot deliver a coup de grace to a creature that is immune to critical hits. Calculate the nonlethal damage from the resulting critical hit just as you would normally. If the nonlethal damage isn't sufficient to render the subject unconscious (see page 153 in the *Player's Handbook*),

save. If the gnoll fails the save, its
total immediately rises to 22 (curre
and it falls unconscious. This is rou
lent of being killed when you fail yo
against a lethal coup de grace, sinc
-10 hit points.

**Many animated objects have hardne
affect, if any, will an animated objec
on spells used against the animated
example, an animated wooden table**

ness
wou
affe
fire
bolt
arro
and

If the spell in question has an ene
hardness affects the attack as noted
damaging inanimate objects (see pag
Player's Handbook) with exceptions
here's a summary:

• Acid and sonic attacks ignore ha
acid arrow has the acid descriptor a
an animated object's hardness.

• Hardness applies to electricity a
These attacks deal half damage to in
but animated objects are creatures
damage (less the effect of the hardn
subtract 5 points for hardness from
age a *fireball* or *lightning bolt* spell
mated table in your example. Reduc
a successful saving throw before yo

• Hardness also applies to cold da
attacks deal one-quarter damage to
but again, an animated object takes
the effect of the hardness. You wou
points of damage for hardness from
age a *ray of frost* spell deals to the
your example. Since *ray of frost* on
points of damage, it will prove ineff
animated table unless you somehow
increase the damage the spell deals.

• Force effects ignore hardness.
spell is a force effect that normally
at an object. Because an animated o
ture, it can affect the animated tabl

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If you aren't of the right level to read a scroll, you have to make a caster level check to actually use the scroll, right? If this fails, you have to make a DC 5 Wisdom check to avoid a mishap. What happens to the scroll if you fail both checks? Does the failure erase the scroll? What happens if you fail the caster level check, but make the Wisdom check? Is the writing on the scroll still there?

If you do not succeed in activating a scroll spell, the spell is not used up. If you suffer a mishap when you fail to cast the spell, however, you activate the scroll after a fashion and the scroll is wasted. You likewise lose the spell on the scroll if you fail any Concentration check you might have to make while using the scroll. You also lose the spell from the scroll or if you fail any arcane spell failure roll you might have to make when using the scroll.

Can you take 10 or take 20 when attempting to activate a scroll?

No. If you need to make a check to cast a spell from a scroll (see page 238 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), you must make a caster level check to do so. You can never take 10 on a caster level check (see page 65 in the *Player's Handbook*). Since there is a chance for a mishap when you fail to activate a scroll, you can't take 20 on the check (also see page 65 in the *Player's Handbook*).

How does *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* work with preparing extra spells? Can I cast *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* in the middle of the day, and then prepare three levels of new spells with 15 minutes of preparation? Or do I have to cast the enhancer in the morning to get the new spells? The spell description says you prepare and cast the extra spells normally, so I assume that you have to take the 15 minutes to prepare the new spells in the middle of the day. Is this correct?

Perhaps a general overview of the *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* spell is in order: You can use the spell one of two ways, either to prepare up to three levels of extra spells or to retain a single spell of up to 3rd level that you have already cast.

When you use the enhancer to retain a spell, you simply cast the enhancer within 1 round of casting the spell you want to retain. The spell you choose to retain reappears in your mind, ready to cast, without any further effort on your part.

When using the spell to prepare extra spells, you follow all the rules for preparing spells. You could indeed cast *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* in the middle of the day and then spend 15 minutes preparing up to three levels of additional spells. Or you could cast the spell at the beginning of the day and prepare all your spells, your normal allotment and the extras, as part of your usual preparation time (usually 1 hour; see page 178 in the *Player's Handbook*).

DORK TOWER
BY JOHN KOVALIC
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, CARSON?
SELLING SOME OF MY GAMES ONLINE.
SELLING YOUR GAMES? NO WAY!
GROAN I HAVE TO ...
BUT...BUT... (SPLUTTER) THAT'S JUST UNHEARD OF!
SELLING YOUR GAMES!
HOW DID IT COME TO THIS?
WELL, I JUST SAT DOWN ONE DAY AND CALCULATED WHAT I SPENT EVERY WEEK ON GAMES.
IT'S A RIDICULOUS AMOUNT. INSANE. AND IT ALL ADDS UP, YOU KNOW. I NEVER HAVE ANY MONEY LEFT OVER!
SO I HAVE TO SELL SOME OF MY GAMES, BECAUSE I NEED THE CASH.
SIGH. WELL, THAT'S TOO BAD.
WHAT DO YOU NEED THE CASH FOR?
BUYING MORE GAMES.
YOU NEED HELP...
KOVALIC

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Nodwick

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com

"A butcher who backs into a meat grinder gets a little behind in his orders." -probably not Confucious

I DIDN'T THINK THE ADVENTURERS' GUILD EVEN HAD A FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROGRAM.
WELL, THIS IS THE FIRST YEAR FOR IT, SO THEY WANTED TO MAKE SURE IT WAS DONE RIGHT, I GUESS.
THEY SEEMED REALLY HAPPY TO HAVE US GO.
HUH. THEY SEEM TO HAVE GIVEN US A ONE-WAY GATE SPELL BY MISTAKE.
GREETINGS, HONORED GUESTS. WE WERE WARNED--ER, TOLD THAT YOU WOULD BE COMING TO LEARN OUR WAYS.
OR DIE TRYING.
TSK! YOU LOSE SO MUCH FACE IT IS A WONDER YOU STILL HAVE A NOSE!
I HAVE THE TRAINING EQUIPMENT, MASTERS.
THIS TECHNIQUE IS CALLED "THE WAY OF THE TORMENTED SPINE."
THIS IS "THE WAY OF THE EXANGUINATING WINDS."
AND THIS IS "THE WAY OF THE REPROVING DEITY."
TORMENTED SPINE?
EXSANGUINATING WINDS?
REPROVING DEITY?
KILL STUFF WITH MAGIC.
KILL STUFF WITH YOUR SWORD.
KILL STUFF WITH YOUR GOD, BUT TRY NOT TO ACT LIKE YOU ENJOY IT.
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU TEACH ME?
HOW ABOUT "THE WAY OF THE SACRIFICIAL PACK-MULE?"
SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, AT THE ADVENTURERS' GUILD...
SINCE YOU SOMEHOW MANAGED TO MAKE IT BACK HOME, WHAT DID YOU LEARN ON YOUR TRIP?
HOW TO FOCUS MY CHI.
TO FLOW LIKE THE STREAM IN COMBAT.
TO ATTAIN BALANCE WITH THE COSMOS.
NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO, THERE YOU ARE.
ADVENTURERS' GUILD